H78

PRIVATE LIBRARY OF J. A. LYTLE
ALMA NON SINE PULVERE

A Christmas gift from "Jimmie"
1921,

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/modernreligiousl0000unse_v7y1

MODERN RELIGIOUS LIBERALISM

THE DESTRUCTIVENESS AND IRRATIONALITY OF THE NEW THEOLOGY

By

JOHN HORSCH

Author of "A Short History of Christianity," "Menno Simons, His Life, Labors and Teachings," etc.

LIBRARY OF
Bonebrake Theological Seminary
12075
BR
1617
H6
1921

FUNDAMENTAL TRUTH DEPOT
Scottdale, Pa.

Copyright, 1920, 1921, by JOHN HORSCH

FOREWORD

The present book was born of the conviction that the modern religious liberalism, popularly known as the higher criticism, means the abandonment of the Christian faith. The new theology discredits and destroys the foundations of Christianity as Christianity has been known in all ages from the time of its origin. It also discards the true basis for morality. It is therefore the great menace both to Christianity and to society and the state, though it comes under a religious cloak professing to be a needed improvement on the old faith; it claims to be called to save the church from threatening shipwreck. By means of counterfeiting and camouflage it has gained access into some professedly orthodox pulpits and churches. In some instances the citadel has been surrendered without a struggle. Many a theological student has been deceived by the orthodox appearance of the more moderate type of the new theology. Obviously there is need for literature exposing the great menace to the faith in a way that "he who runneth may read" and be enabled to recognize the new theology when he meets it.

My aim has been to set forth in plain language the true character, the destructive nature and unreasonableness of the modern religious liberalism in contrast to the evangeli-

cal faith, and the imperative need of an attitude of strict non-compromise. I have endeavored, as much as possible, to let the representatives of liberalism speak for themselves, and have cited a few defenders of evangelical orthodoxy. While the conflict is one between two irreconcilable religious positions and in such matters it is unquestionably necessary to "call a spade a spade", it has been my aim "to speak the truth in love." For setting forth the religious position of new theology authors and institutions I have no apology to offer. If one who is halting between two opinions on these most important questions may find this book a help in making an unreserved decision for the truth of God's Word, I shall feel that the book has been worth while.

A number of the chapters of the present book have been published separately in pamphlet form.

J. H.

INTRODUCTORY

Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? Luke 18:8.

For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables. II Tim. 4:3, 4. (R. V.)

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable and poor and blind and naked. Rev. 3:15-17.

Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Matt. 7:15, 16.

Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers: for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? or what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what portion hath a believer with an unbeliever? — Wherefore come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord. II Cor. 6:14-17. (R. V.)

But whoso shall cause one of these little ones that believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and that he should be sunk in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh! Matt. 18:6, 7. (R. V.)

For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God. I Cor. 1:18.

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble [of the titled aristocracy] are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence. I Cor. 1:26-29.

At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight. Matt. 11:25, 26.

The world hateth them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. John 17:14.

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. John 6:67-69.

Behold I come quickly: hold fast that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Rev. 3:11.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	A Religious Revolution	9
II	The Inspiration and Authority of the Holy Scriptures	18
III	Christian Experience	35
IV	Religious Certainty Considered from the Liberal Point of View	45
V	Philosophy and Theology	52
VI	The Fathers of the New Theology	62
VII	The Modern Doctrine of Divine Immanence	66
VIII	The Biblical and the Modern View of Prayer	80
IX	The Deity of Christ Versus the Modern Doctrine of the Divinity of Man	85
X	Sin and Salvation	94
XI	Two Types of the New Theology Compared	105
XII	The Ethical Interpretation of Religion — The New Morality	118

CHAPTER		PAGE
XIII	The Social Gospel	132
XIV	Religious Democracy, The Denial of God's Sovereignty	146
XV	The New View of Religious Education	164
XVI	The Modern View of Missions	176
XVII	Modern Religious Unionism	192
XVIII	Church Discipline Versus Persecution	200
XIX	Historical Falsehoods — Contrast Between Freedom and Anarchy	207
XXI	Science	225
XXII	Evolutionism	232
XXIII	What Ails Our Colleges and Seminaries?	239
XXIV	The Immorality of Theological Counterfeiting and Camouflage	266
XXV	The New Theology in the Light of the World War	280
XXVI	The Inefficiency of Religious Liberalism	286
XXVII	The Failure of Unitarianism	294
XXVIII	The Chasm Between the Old and the New Theology	309
	Index	324

MODERN RELIGIOUS LIBERALISM

I

A RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION

About a generation ago Robert G. Ingersoll made himself a name among unbelievers by publicly denouncing the Christian faith. He believed himself to be an infidel and was recognized as such by the world at large. The idea that he was a Christian would have been absurd to him as well as to his contemporaries.

Now a number of liberalistic theological writers have come forward with the assertion that Robert G. Ingersoll, since he advocated moral betterment and reform, was mistaken in his own opinion of himself as concerns his religious position and his relationship to Christianity. Among those who have expressed themselves on this point is Dean Shailer Mathews, of the theological department of the University of Chicago, who remarks in a magazine article that the times are past when a man like Ingersoll can be regarded as a veritable anti-Christ.[1] President Faunce of Brown University, in an article on *Religious Advance in Fifty Years,* says, the attacks of Robert Ingersoll "which made our fathers shiver and quake" would today be out of date

[1] *The Constructive Quarterly. A Journal of the Faith, Work and Thought of Christendom.* March, 1913, p. 106.

and have no such effect; "Ingersoll now seems like a crusader against windmills."[2] The figure is taken, as will be readily recognized, from Don Quixote who fought an imaginary foe which at daybreak turned out to be nothing but harmless windmills. This author evidently believes that the orthodox teachings which Ingersoll attacked have had their day; to fight them now is like making war on windmills. While this is an extravagant opinion, since the liberalistic theological views are by no means so generally accepted as this author intimates, the fact remains that to representatives of religious liberalism the attack on the old Bible faith seems like a war on windmills—so radically does the new theology differ from the old theology which Ingersoll attacked.

The modern theological liberalism takes the position that no one can be considered an unbeliever, or non-Christian, because of his rejection of Christian doctrine. "No man ever lived who really disbelieved in the Christian religion," says Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis. "Infidel to Christianity? You might as well say that a man does not believe in roses or lilies, or is infidel toward wheat and milk, and abhors apples and oranges, grapes and honey. The very thought is absurd and self-contradictory."[3] In other words, there are, according to this writer, no unbelievers. The fact is that men who advocate such views on Christian doctrine as did Robert G. Ingersoll are now often considered Christians and are welcomed into the modern church. Indeed such men are holding professorships in theological seminaries; to them is entrusted the training and education of the coming ministers of the Gospel. It should be added that re-

[2] *The American Journal of Theology.* Edited by the Divinity Faculty of the University of Chicago. 1916, p. 338.

[3] *The Religious Digest,* April, 1919.

ligious liberalists claim also to have discovered that there are no heathen. *Clearly these things are the consequence of a religious revolution.*

The fact that the new theology is the result of a religious revolution is freely admitted by new theology writers. A few of them are here quoted. Dr. Lyman Abbott, the well known liberalistic leader, says, "The old orthodoxy is right in regarding the New [Bible] Criticism as revolutionary."[4] "The philosophy of religion has within the last generation undergone a revolution," says Professor Edward Caldwell Moore, of Harvard University.[5] Professor Edward Scribner Ames, of the University of Chicago, speaks of "the present *revolt against doctrinal theology.*"[6] Concerning Dr. Ames' book, *The New Orthodoxy,* a Unitarian periodical says, it advocates religious conceptions which differ in no wise from those of the Unitarians, and "the new orthodoxy has certainly *nothing in common* with what was formerly cherished under that name."[7] George Holley Gilbert, a new theology author, speaks of *"the vast transformation*

---

[4] *The Theology of an Evolutionist,* 1897, p. 61. In one of his more recent books Dr. Abbott has a chapter on *A Religious Revolution.*

[5] *The Spread of Christianity in the Modern World,* Chicago, 1919, p. 84.

[6] *The Biblical World.* Edited by Shailer Mathews. July, 1917, p. 55. In the quotation to which this note refers, the words, *revolt against doctrinal theology* are printed in type called Italics. In the original these words are not printed in such type. "Italics mine" means that Italics are used by the author of the present book, while in the original the words in question are not printed in Italics.

[7] *The Christian Register. A Journal of Liberal Christianity.* February 20, 1919, p. 183. The editor adds that "it is for holding precisely the views set forth in Professor Ames' book that Unitarians have been denied the Christian name and fellowship."

which the Christian faith is surely and in part silently undergoing."[8]

Professor Errett Gates, of the University of Chicago, says: "Christianity is now being compelled to reshape its message and *redefine its essence.*"[9] "The very conception of religion, our interpretation of spiritual processes, and even our way of conceiving the Living God and His relationship to the world, is undergoing *a radical transformation,*" writes Dr. Herbert Alden Youtz of the Oberlin Graduate School of Theology.[10] The Unitarian theologian, Dr. George E. Ellis, in an address before the Unitarian Club of Boston, in 1882, said, "The Evangelical sects, so called, are clearly right in maintaining that their view of Scripture and its doctrines draws *a deep and wide division of creed between them and ourselves.*"[11] Dr. James T. Shotwell, of Colgate University, says in his book, *The Religious Revolution of Today:*

> Our problem is not to prove the existence of religious revolution, for that is admitted by all who give the situation any thought, and is the starting point for almost any treatment of the place of religion in modern life . . . a change so fundamental that it seems to imply the overturn of the whole trend of past philosophies.[12]— The brand of superstition is now being placed upon many of the most cherished beliefs of our fathers.[13]

Dr. K. C. Anderson, Pastor of a liberal church at Dundee, Scotland, writes: "Liberal Christianity is *a radical departure* from the creed of Christendom."[14] And again:

---

[8] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1910, p. 271.

[9] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* edited by Gerald Birney Smith, Chicago, 1916, p. 479. Italics mine.

[10] *Democratizing Theology,* Boston, 1919, p. 4.

[11] Dunning, A. E., *Congregationalists in America,* 1894, p. 314.

[12] Page 6 f.

[13] The same, p. 1.

[14] *The Hibbert Journal,* vol. 8, p. 314.

It is well that we should be aware what a radical change is involved in the transfer from the orthodox to the liberal position.[15] — The important question is whether the Christian church can make the great change of belief which the acceptance of the modern critics' Jesus would involve, and remain the Christian church. It is important that the churches of Christendom should realize the kind of Jesus the critics are presenting them with, and *the vast revolution in belief which it involves.*[16] — *The triumph of liberalism is really a defeat, for it means the destruction of Christianity as Christianity has been known in all ages of its history.*[17]

A prominent representative of the new theology writes:

We destroy much that was formerly accepted by Christian believers. We deny the authority of the Scriptures; we see in Scripture both truth and error. It goes without saying that we do not consider ourselves under duty to abide by the teaching of Scripture. We do not believe the miracles which are recorded in Scripture, nay, we positively deny them. All stories of miracles contained in Scripture we believe to be either fables or allegories. We do not believe that Jesus was the Son of God; we do not believe he was God-man; we do not believe he was a perfect man; we do not believe he was free from every error, from every sin. Neither his sayings nor his life are to us authoritative in every respect. He is to us a great prophet, like many others.

Dr. John H. Boyd, having accepted a call to a professorship in the McCormick Theological Seminary, said in his farewell sermon to his people in Portland, Oregon:

I have not pleaded with you to believe in God. I have not asked you to bring your sins to be forgiven, primarily. I have not asked you to believe in the realities of the spiritual world. I have asked you to believe in yourselves, in the divinity of men, in the greatness of the human soul. I have asked you to believe in worthy character, in the worthiness of unselfish purity and manliness. I have believed that if you accept the teachings of Jesus Christ and become conscious of your own possibilities, you would grow out

---

[15] *The Monist,* 1915, p. 46.

[16] The same, p. 55.

[17] The same, p. 57. Italics mine.

and for yourselves find God and spiritual realities. Those who can see the infinite reach of themselves can see God, can strengthen themselves, and the spiritual world is open to them. *Men are what they are because of a fatal disbelief in their own divinity.*[18]

Are not such sentiments, expressed by a Pastor of an evangelical church, evidence of religious revolution?

President Cyrus Northup, of the University of Minnesota, says:

It seems to me that, in looking at the state of thought in the [liberalized] church in reference to its own faith, we are confronted by four marked changes which have grown into prominence in the last few years. These changes stated briefly are: First, a decay of belief in the supernatural. Second, what we may call the disintegration [the acceptance of the modern views] of the Bible. Third, new views respecting inspiration [denying the vital differences between the Scriptures and other literature]. Fourth, loss of the sense of accountability [the breaking down of moral standards and responsibility]. These four changes are essentially *one*. They are shoots from a common root—and that root is doubt as to whether God ever has had any communication with men. Under this doubt Christianity ceases to be the religion which God intended for men to cherish and becomes simply one of the religions of the world—a purely human device, like Confucianism or Mohammedanism; of no more authority than these and to be preferred to these only as its teachings are more reasonable and uplifting.

This is a correct statement of the views disseminated by most of our leading theological seminaries.

President Arthur Cushman McGiffert, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, says: "Whether we like it or not, this [namely the new theology views of the nature of the Christian religion and of conversion] is working a revolution in modern thought, and the end is not yet."[19] Furthermore Dr. McGiffert points out that the doctrine of

---

[18] *The Christian Register,* December 11, 1919, p. 3.

[19] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1916, p. 323.

divine immanence, which is now generally accepted among liberals, ascribes divinity to man, since it is supposed that man's nature is one with God's and he needs simply to awake to that fact. "This means, of course, a revolution in the old conception of salvation;" this author says further, "what man requires is not regeneration in the old sense, or a change of nature, but simply *an awakening to what he really is.*"[20] Again this author says:

We have learned, not to think of the Bible as the final and infallibe authority and have come to see that there is no such authority and that we need none. The result has been a change of simply untold consequence. The conservatives who feared and opposed Biblical criticism in its early days because *they saw what a revolution it portended* were far more clearsighted than most of the liberals who thought that it meant simply a shifting of position.[21] —*The chasm is deep. What is before us no one knows.*[22]

One of the most noted defenders of religious liberalism, the late Professor George Burman Foster, of the University of Chicago, said:

The sum of what I have just been urging amounts to the profoundest change of [religious] thought known to history.[23] — One may say that not supernatural regeneration, but natural growth; not divine sanctification, but human education; not supernatural grace, but natural morality; not the divine expiation of the cross, but the human heroism—or accident?—of the cross; . . . not Christ the Lord, but the man Jesus who was a child of his time; not God and His providence, but evolution and its process without an absolute goal—that all this, and such as this, is the new turn in the affairs of religion at the tick of the clock.[24]

---

[20] McGiffert, *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas,* p. 206.

[21] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1916, p. 326. Italics mine.

[22] The same, p. 332.

[23] *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence,* 1909, p. 178.

[24] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 736.

A representative of evangelical Christianity writes in *The Moravian:*

It is every day becoming more apparent that in our churches two irreconcilable theological drifts are forcing themselves on our attention. The one we might call the conservative or positive or evangelical position. The other we might call the liberal or speculative or higher-critical position. In the final analysis of these two positions the former insists on a supernatural basis for the Christian religion, while the latter denies the supernatural and substitutes a purely natural basis.

The former position has in our day found its clearest expression through the Bible Institutes and training schools, through evangelistic and missionary activity; the latter through Unitarianism, and so-called higher criticism in many of our theological seminaries and liberal pulpits. Thinking people are discovering, even if rather slowly, *that these two positions can never be reconciled.* They have been, are, and will always be, fundamentally at war with each other, and we might just as well save our precious breath crying "Peace! Peace" when there can be no peace.

"Throughout all Protestantism," says a recent writer, "especially in the colleges and theological training-schools under the guise of 'higher criticism' and 'liberal Christianity' there is being waged the most determined and far-reaching assault upon our holy Christianity that it has ever endured since apostolic times. The Christian religion 'wounded in the house of its friends' must get the victory over these insidious but deadly foes." Another writer says:

It is no use attempting to minimize the difference between the traditional [orthodox] view and the critical treatment of the Old Testament. The differences are immense; they involve different conceptions of the relation of God to the world, different views as to the nature of inspiration etc. We cannot be lifted from the old to the new position by the influence of a charming literary style or by the force of the most enthusiastic eloquence.

It would indeed be useless to deny or belittle the radical contrasts between the old Bible faith and religious liberalism. So great and fundamental are these differences that,

if the one is Christianity, the other must be something else. It has been said that liberalism has changed all the doctrines of the old faith as held by Christendom from the beginning. The fact is, as pointed out in preceding quotations, liberalism sets aside these doctrines and disowns them. Indeed, Christianity has more in common with Judaism and some other non-Christian religions than with men who take a position not dissimilar to that of Robert G. Ingersoll.

Much as the renunciation of the old faith, on the part of liberalists, is to be regretted, the most offensive feature of religious liberalism is that it comes under the old Biblical name and claims to be Christian theology—an improvement on the old faith;—all this in the face of the fact that liberalists, as we have seen, recognize the great chasm which separates them from Biblical Christianity. And they have the courage to deny to the old faith the right of existence in the church. The rejection of Scriptural orthodoxy, they say, is needful for the prosperity of the church. It is as if within a political party which was founded on the principle of a protective tariff there arose a new party which defended free trade, but insisted on retaining the old party name and connections, urging the excuse that the protective tariff principles, when properly interpreted, mean free trade, since it is supposed that free trade alone is economically sound.

The modern apostasy from the Christian faith which has resulted from a religious revolution, disowns the fundamentals of the faith but claims to be the Christian religion and to rightfully hold an exclusive place in the church.

11

THE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

The doctrine of the plenary or verbal inspiration of the Scriptures is taught in the Bible and is the only doctrine of Biblical inspiration that is consistent with the claims and contents of the Bible message. Its practical meaning is that the Bible is infallible. This doctrine must not be confounded with the mechanical or dictation theory which implies the suppression of the human element altogether. Though mechanical inspiration is not claimed for the Scriptures, it is necessary to emphasize the fact that, whether the holy writers committed to writing a direct message from God (as did in many instances Moses and the prophets), or whether they stated truth as they, by divine illumination, saw it, or recorded what they themselves had witnessed, or other facts of history, they were in every instance moved by the Holy Ghost to such extent that their writings are not subject to error. This implies the principle of verbal inspiration. The Holy Spirit guided them in the choice of words to the end that the truth was expressed and error avoided. The original manuscripts of the Scriptures were in this sense verbally inspired.

Inspiration, then, must be distinguished from illumination. True, the holy writers were enlightened by the Holy

Spirit, but illumination alone would not have enabled them to write the infallible Word of God. Neither can verbal inspiration be sufficiently accounted for on the ground that the writers were holy men. Many other Christian writers were true saints of the Lord. Again, it is immaterial whether all the holy writers knew at the time of their writing that the Holy Spirit was guiding them to the extent that they wrote inerrantly. Nor can it be supposed that these writers had the ability to write infallibly at all times. All this means that the holy writers were, while they wrote the Scriptures, in a very special sense the tools of the Holy Spirit. The Bible is the result of the supernatural working of God. It is the Word of God. The old proof-text method of using Scripture is the method of Christ and the apostles. It is the only method consistent with Scripture teaching as to the nature of the Scriptures.

The various older manuscripts of the Bible which are now in existence have numerous variations of the text, arising from the fact that copyists hardly ever do perfect work. These variations, or various readings, are not of such importance as some of the liberalistic writers would have us believe. The comparative study of the manuscripts by competent scholars has given us a reliable Greek and Hebrew text, and our English versions have been brought to a remarkable perfection. It is certain beyond a doubt that if we had the original writings, it would make no appreciable difference in the teachings of the Bible.

In recent times the opinion has been advanced that the inspiration of Scripture has to do merely with the thought of Scripture. It is supposed that the writers of the books of the Bible wrote the thoughts, or the messages, that were given them of God but were not under the special guidance of God. Yet unless these writers were led by God in the

choice of their words to the extent that they wrote inerrantly, we should have in Scripture not the infallible revelation of God but a mere *record* of revelation—a record which would be human and therefore imperfect in character. "If inspiration does not render the holy Scriptures infallible, their nature is no longer divine but human," says Professor George Johnson.[1]

There are at the present time theologians who would shift the authority from the infallible Bible to the infallible Christ. They are of the opinion that it matters little whether or no the Bible is inerrant so long as we have Christ and His word to build upon, just as we have the word of Plato or other great men of antiquity. But the words of Plato cannot be compared with Christ's words on point of importance. Plato did not bring to men a supernatural revelation; his writings must be judged entirely by human standards. Christ, on the other hand, taught truths that come to us as divine revelation. Some of these truths cannot be verified by experience or human knowledge. The fact that Christ was infallible would not give us an infallible divine authority if we had not the inerrant statement or record of His words and acts. What would Christ's infallibility benefit us if the record which we have of Him be unreliable? It is inconceivable—is it not?—that God would accomplish the great work of the redemption of mankind and reveal to fallen man the true way of salvation, and then leave us with a fallible account of it all—an unreliable record such as modernists believe the Scriptures to be.

There are, then, theologians who hold the opinion that the Scriptures are not infallible, though they consider the words of Christ and certain other parts of the Bible

---

[1] *The Princeton Theological Review*, 1914, p. 461.

acceptable. Now from this position there is but a step to the radically liberalistic view: that, since the Scriptures are not unerring, the account of Christ's supernatural character, His birth, His miracles, etc., is unacceptable. This means the rejection of the Biblical account of the life of our Lord, and the acceptance of the view that we know nothing reliable about His life. Again, he who adopts such views will find that, to be consistent, he cannot hold the record of Christ's words to be more trust-worthy than the record of His miraculous works. It is idle to make an attempt to defend the one while disowning the other. Indeed Christ's own words have largely reference to that which is supernatural and miraculous.

One of the radical critics, Professor Karl Bornhausen, of Marburg, points out that soon after the doctrine of inspiration had been discarded, the Bible record of Jesus' life and miraculous deeds was judged unacceptable, and "close upon this supposition followed the criticism of the words of Jesus."[2] Another liberalistic writer says rightfully, if the Bible is not held to be inerrant, "the teachings of Jesus which are recorded in the Bible cannot be considered as an absolute rule of truth."[3] The same writer (who is a minister in an evangelical denomination) says further: "My ultimate standard is not Christ—neither the Christ of history nor the Christ of faith; I want to know God. I want him to be my standard of perfection. — The standard cannot be creeds and dogmas, the Bible or any particular part of it, or the Master and His teachings."[4] Thus the rejection of the Bible as an inerrant authority leads to the rejection of the authority of Christ. The last mentioned author

---

[2] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1914, p. 201.

[3] *The Biblical World,* March, 1919, p. 150.

[4] The same, p. 155.

would retain the authority of God but neglects to tell us what he means when he refers to God. Clearly he does not speak of God as revealed in Scripture. He fails to inform us how God can be his "standard of perfection," if we do not have an authoritative revelation of God.

The term higher criticism was formerly used in an acceptable sense. It meant an examination of the text of the Bible with a view of settling the date, human authorship, purpose, etc., of its component parts. In the modern liberalistic sense higher criticism means the study of the Scriptures from the viewpoint of naturalism. The leading principle is the denial of the supernatural character of divine revelation in Scripture. The supernatural is explained away on the assumption that it is due to mistaken ideas of the writers of the Biblical books. Modern higher criticism is also called the historical method of Biblical interpretation, or the historical treatment of religion, since it undertakes the study of the Scriptures from the purely human historical viewpoint insisting that the history of Christ and of those who, according to Bible teaching, were used of God for special purposes, was not different in character from other human history The critics take the position that all that cannot be explained by human standards of knowledge is unacceptable. All questions pertaining to Bible study are approached on the basis of naturalism and rationalism. In short, the modern higher criticism is based on the denial of the divine character and authority of the Scriptures.

Another term which has acquired a new meaning in liberalistic usage is "the inductive method of the study of Scripture," as contrasted to the deductive method. The latter method accepts the Scriptures as God's Word and, a-

greeable with this truth, makes its deductions and conclusions. The modern inductive method, on the other hand, starts with the presumption that the Scriptures are not God's Word in any real sense, hence no conclusions must be made as if the whole Bible were divinely inspired; nothing must be approved on the mere authority of Scripture. The inductive method of Bible study undertakes to study Scripture, part for part, with a view of determining whether the part in question is in any sense inspired and acceptable. The Bible is not looked upon as man's judge, but man is supposed to be the judge of the Bible. It is readily seen that this method of study is merely another term for modern higher criticism.

Modernists tell us, as already intimated, that of the contents of Scripture only that which has to do directly with the religious life of man was given of God to the Biblical writers. This means that inspiration, even in this loose sense, would not apply to Scripture narration of historical events and hence not to the record of miracles. If this were the correct view you might believe in the inspiration of Scripture and yet question the miracles. They who hold such views deny the vital importance of Scripture narration. They ignore the fact that the truth of Christianity depends on certain historical facts, such as the life, death, and resurrection of Christ. Nevertheless many of those who take such an attitude would retain some of the moral and religious teaching of the Bible.

Again if such theologians are asked how they suppose that God revealed religious thoughts to the holy writers, they answer, as a rule, that these thoughts came to them through their religious experience. In other words, they see in the Bible (or in parts of it) nothing more than a record of the religious experience of certain men, or, more correct-

ly speaking, a more or less questionable record of what they thought they had experienced. "We are becoming accustomed to the use of the Bible as a book of religious experience," says Professor Gerald Birney Smith, " rather than a supernaturally produced literature."[5] Now the term "religious experience" is an impressive one, but, as will be pointed out elsewhere, "religious experience" has been deprived of all real meaning by the representatives of liberalism. In the last analysis they hold that the Bible is merely "the outgrowth of men's thinking," just as all other religious books.[6] These liberalistic theologians teach that the religious books of the Mohammedans and pagans, as well as modern religious writings, (being also in a sense a record of religious experience) are, as concerns authority, on a par with the Bible. They see in Scripture simply "man's enlarging thought and discovery of God, not God's progressive revelation of Himself to man." Nevertheless they profess to believe in the inspiration of Scripture. Now such a view of inspiration cannot be taken seriously; it is a mere make-believe. Modern theology denies the personality of the Holy Spirit; the Spirit is "conceived as energy, or force in operation; the force or energy which pervades the world," says Professor H. C. Ackerman, of the Theological Institute at Nashotah, Wis. Hence, this writer asserts that "in the field of religious [and Biblical] inspiration the spirit is [not a personal Being, but] that stirring *interest* in ideas and ideals of God and man which leads to the discovery and foundation of the most efficient religion."[7] In other words, inspiration is not the work of the divine Spirit but of the

---

[5] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 553.
[6] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1917, p. 355.
[7] *The Biblical World,* March, 1919, p. 148.

spirit of man. It is readily seen that this doctrine of inspiration is mere word-jugglery.

The leading modern critics, then, do not distinguish between divine inspiration, in the sense in which this term is used when we speak of the inspiration of Scripture, and the various other uses of the word inspiration. They tell us that the Scriptures are inspired in a similar sense as some poem or some new idea may prove inspiring to us. In their opinion Shakespeare and Goethe were inspired as well as the Biblical writers. Professor Edward Scribner Ames, of the University of Chicago, for example, mentions quite a number of writers: Tennyson and Whittier and Bryant and Lowell and Phillips Brooks and Shakespeare and Maeterlinck and Kepler and Darwin and John Locke and William James who, in his view, should be included in the sacred canon of Scripture.[8] He thinks the canon of Scripture has, by the critics, been "made continuous with the ampler Scriptures of the whole spiritual development of mankind."[9] "Modern religious thinking," says Dr. Gerald Birney Smith, "is learning to draw its inspiration from the world in which we live."[10] George Burman Foster has asserted that a Bible greater and richer than the Christian Bible has come into existence, namely the Bible of Humanity (whatever that may mean). "In this Bible of Humanity," he says, "we too ought to write."[11] And again he says, the new doubt—for which Professor Foster himself stood—flung down the gauntlet to the old Bible faith with the result that "the Sacred Book was found a human book." There-

---

[8] *The New Orthodoxy,* p. 81.

[9] The same, p. 69.

[10] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 570.

[11] *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence,* p. 292.

for the Bible "had no right to rule over man. Man was the book's judge, the book was not man's judge."[12] All these writers are entertaining agnostic, non-Christian views of the Bible.

William Newton Clarke, the well-known advocate of the new theology, wrote: "The authority of the Scriptures is the authority of the truth that they convey."[13] And again: "If Christianity were not historically true, no divine aid in the composition of its scriptures could make it true."[14] Hence this author, with many other writers, rejects the authority of Scripture, substituting for it the authority of truth. He persistently ignores the fact that the most important truths which the Bible brings to us, are dependent on the authority of the Scriptures as God's Word and cannot be verified in any other way. Deny the authority of the Bible and you will find yourself compelled to take the position of an agnostic in regard to these truths. Furthermore, Christianity is, as already said, grounded on certain historical facts, such as Christ's supernatural birth, the Atonement, the resurrection etc. To maintain these facts when the authority of Scripture is rejected, is impossible. The Scriptures, Christ the Savior, and Christianity stand and fall together. Now all the liberal critics, William Newton Clarke included, tell us that the Bible contains much that is unacceptable historically. In fact they would make the Bible one of the most unreliable books. And then again they have the courage to tell us that the question of the inspiration and authority of Scripture is of no importance.

---

[12] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, p. 740.
[13] *An Outline of Christian Theology*, p. 45.
[14] The same, p. 38.

Such is the modern liberalistic view of the Bible. It has been said that this view makes the Bible a huge mistake. While this is true, it is not the whole truth. If the liberalistic view be correct, the Bible would be not merely a mistake but a fraud—a pious fraud, if you like. But suppose for the moment that the Bible be merely of equal value with Shakespeare and other useful books in general, the wonder is then, that some of our modern critics confess surprise over the fact that the practice of daily reading the Scriptures is generally discontinued in liberalistic circles. Do they not realize that, where their own views prevail, it is asking too much that this practice be kept up? Not long ago a Unitarian writer said in *The Christian Register:*

> It is still a good home to be born into, this home of the liberal faith—good in many respects: but so far as responsibility for the religiousness of the children is concerned the parents have abdicated. Someone says that in the modern home the daily bath has taken the place of the morning prayer. It is better for hygiene—is it for holiness, for character? The modern liberal parent seems to reply, "Cleanliness comes before godliness and one will suffice." — This sunset of religiousness is by no means confined to Unitarian homes nor to those of liberal orthodoxy. But it is probably most marked in homes of the liberal faith, and doubtless the liberalizing has much to do with it.

William Newton Clarke has written a book in which he undertakes to show that as the supernatural and superhuman has faded out of his thought of the Bible and its contents, in the same degree the Bible has become inspiring to him. The more fully he recognized its (supposed) shortcomings, the more valuable he found the Bible to be and the more acceptable as a vehicle of the revelation of God. Similar assertions have been made by many liberalistic writers. The liberal critics have, in fact, generally defended this view. Says Gerald Birney Smith: "For the man of scientific spirit criticism [even if it be of the most radically

negative character] is never destructive,"[15] in other words, there is not such a thing as destructive critisicm—the most radical of the higher critics are not doing destructive work. This view of the modern liberalists is only an evidence of their inability to consider these matters in an unbiased way. It is refreshing to notice that there are at least a few representatives of liberalism who are willing to admit that the modern higher criticism is destructive to the value of the Scriptures.

Wellhausen, the foremost radical Old Testament critic, when asked whether, if his views were accepted, the Bible would retain its place in the estimation of the people in general, said: "I cannot see how that is possible." A Unitarian writer says: "Under the higher criticism the religious value of the Bible tends to disappear."[16] Dr. M. J. Savage, pastor of a Unitarian church in Boston has admitted: "We are gradually drifting away from the idea that the Bible has any special significance or authority."[17] Another Unitarian writer says: "Materialistic science and Biblical criticism have brought multitudes to the brink of despair."[18] "If the whole truth is to be told," says a Unitarian clergyman in New York, "and that is what I am striving to do as far as limitations of space will permit, Unitarians outstrip all others in their ignorance of the Scriptures and in *their inability to appreciate the permanent value of the sacred writings.*". "The danger of liberalism now is," this writer remarks further "that it will discard the Bible altogether. If it does, then liberalism, as we have it, will deserve only

---

[15] *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology,* p. 187.
[16] *The Christian Register,* Dec. 26, 1918, p. 1236.
[17] Dunning, *Congregationalists in America,* 1894, p. 316
[18] *The Christian Register,* January 8, 1920, p. 22.

death and the world were better off without it."[19] Dr. A. C. Dixon is responsible for the statement that when the British and Foreign Bible Society gave a copy of the Scriptures to each of the graduates of certain Universities in India on the day of their graduation, a freethinker who desired to give them an antidote to the Bible, presented them with a book on the Bible written by a well-known liberal British clergyman.

"When destructive criticism proclaimed to the world that its purpose was to save the Bible to mankind," writes the editor of a religious journal, "it deceived itself and all who held its presumptions. Where the modern Bible criticism has been accepted, it has robbed the people of the substance of Scripture and left them only the husks. Its effect everywhere is to unfit the people for receiving the Gospel." The *Herald and Presbyter says:* "The most serious damage to the Word of God and the church from destructive critics is not in their attack upon individual facts of books of the Bible, but in the loss of confidence in the Bible as a whole which their methods produce."[20]

William Newton Clarke was, as has been intimated, one of a class of theologians who lay claim to the predicate of loyalty to the Scriptures, but explain that this does not mean loyalty to a theory about the Scriptures. They object to definite teaching regarding the divine character of Scripture. They do not hold to any doctrine defining the sense in which they believe the Bible to be inspired, though, as a rule, they hold that the inspiration of Scripture has not to do with the very words but only with the thoughts — or, speaking more corectly, with *some* of the thoughts — con-

---

[19] The same, August 26, 1920, p. 14. Italics mine.
[20] Quoted in *The Bible Champion,* 1915, p. 131.

tained in Scripture. They take the position that no one has a right to insist on definitions concerning the character of Scripture, or, in other words, concerning the ground for and import of the loyalty which they demand. The case is similar to that of certain liberal theologians who profess loyalty to Christ, but insist that to consider His deity essential is to demand loyalty to a mere theory about Him. The fact is that, unless definitions are given and we are permitted to know what a given statement about the Scriptures and Christ really means, it is only the unthinking who can satisfy themselves with such a position. It cannot for a moment be doubted that a weakening down on the doctrine of inspiration has a pronounced tendency of producing a modification in the acceptance of the message found in the Bible. The rejection of the doctrine of inspiration goes together with a doctrine of salvation which differs from the Bible conception.

Dr. Robert Forman Horton, a conservative British theologian, wrote:[21]

> The real difficulty of our time, when we come to probe it, is the dethronement of the Bible from its position of unquestioned authority. From the earliest period of Christianity, even in the writings of the earliest Fathers, the sacred Scriptures were held to be the standard and the test of Christian truth: nothing was to be taught as essential except what was contained in them or could be proven by them; and up to the middle of the last century the imposing fortress of the Book remained practically unquestioned and certainly unbreached. No one within the borders of the Church hesitated to regard the Bible as effectively infallible. A quotation from any part of it carried unquestioned weight, and decisions drawn from its decretals were the settlement of all strife.—[*Liberal*] *Protestants have lost their Bible, and in losing it have lost their religion.* How can they shelter in a building which is demolished

[21] *Contemporary Review*, January, 1917, p. 54.

or which is ever hidden by the scaffolding about it, necessary for perpetual repairs?

Charles Haddon Spurgeon has said:

The turning point of the battle between those who hold "the faith once delivered to the saints" and their opponents, lies in the true and real inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. This is the Thermopylae of Christendom. If we have in the Word of God no infallible standard of truth, we are at sea without a compass, and no danger from rough weather without can be equal to this loss within. "If the foundations be removed, what can the righteous do?" And this is a foundation loss of the worst kind.

"Let us not deceive ourselves," says Professor John Gresham Machen, of Princeton Theological Seminary, "the Bible is at the foundation of the church. Undermine that foundation, and the church will fall. It will fall, and great will be the fall of it."[22]

There yet remains the question of the authority of the Old Testament and its relation to the New Testament Scriptures. The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, having spoken of the Old Covenant, points out that Christ "is the Mediator of a better covenant." "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second" (Heb. 8: 6, 7). While as concerns inspiration there is no difference between the Old and the New Testament Scriptures, the Bible teaches explicitly that the New Covenant surpasses and supersedes the Old and that parts of the Old Testament precepts were intended for pre-Messianic times alone.

The question in what respect the New Covenant surpasses the Old is answered in the same epistle. It is pointed out that the difference arises, principally, from the fact that Christ is the Son, while Moses was the servant (3:1-6).

---

[22] *The Princeton Theological Review,* 1915, p. 351.

Again the writer of this epistle says: "For the law having a shadow of things to come, and not the very image [or substance] of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. — For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." (Heb. 10:1, 4). Those sacrifices were shadows and types pointing to Christ and were fulfilled in Him. The blood of the typical sacrifices covered sin; the blood of Christ cleanses from sin. In the Old Covenant the law was written on tables of stone; in the New it is written in the believer's heart (Jer. 31:33; II. Cor. 3:3). The nature of the Old Covenant law was partly conditioned by the people's hardness of heart, as will be further shown. For the New Covenant the promise is, "I will take away the stony heart . . . and give you an heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26). Our Lord says, that he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than His own forerunner who was not a member of the New Covenant (Luke 7:28). In various instances He dwells upon the superiority of the New Covenant. He also points out differences between His own precepts and certain points of the Mosaic law. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith" (Gal. 3:24).

Again, some of the Ten Commandments have acquired a new meaning through the interpretation of the perfect Teacher. According to New Testament teaching hatred is a transgression of the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" (commit murder). The command, "Thou shalt not steal," according to Christ's teaching, and in the light of Paul's words, Rom. 1:14, means far more than it did under the Old Dispensation. God's children, being saved by Him, are debtors to all men. The closer to God they live, the more they will realize their indebtedness. Unless they meet

it according to their ability, they transgress the command, "Thou shalt not steal." This is the Christian version of this commandment.

In the Old Testament law were incorporated certain precepts touching various usages which had been in vogue in Israel before the giving of the law. Some of these usages were left to Israel because of "the hardness of their hearts" (Matt. 19:8; Mk. 10:1-12). The Lord Jesus said to the Jews: "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives." The supposition that the permission of divorce in the Old Covenant did not have the divine sanction, is entirely groundless. The regulations regarding this matter are a part of the inspired record. And this is not the only instance in which the hardness of heart of Israel was taken into account in God's dealings with them. He had promised to drive out the Cananites in a miraculous manner (Ex. 23:27-30; Deut. 7: 20-22). They lacked the needed faith, however, hence it fell to them to use the sword. And not only did God permit them the use of the sword, but He gave them pertinent laws and precepts and promised them success in their wars. When later the people demanded a king "like all the nations," the Lord said unto Samuel: "Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them" (I. Sam. 8:7). They had not lived in the faith and had not permitted God to lead them and be their ruler. They had rejected the Lord and, in consequence, conditions obtained which made the election of a king necessary. So the Lord Himself chose a king for them (I. Sam. 10: 24; 12:13). Indeed, through His foreknowledge of these things He had given them in the Mosaic law precepts concerning the rule of a king (Deut. 17:14-20).

The question, Why did God not give Israel the law of the New Covenant instead of giving consideration, in some respects, to their hardness of heart—this question is identical with the query why the Redeemer was not given at the time of Moses, or earlier. While a number of reasons may be given why God has made with Israel a covenant such as the Mosaic, giving them a law dealing with types and shadows as a special preparation for the coming of the Savior, the fact should be kept in mind that human opinion does not go far in such matters. Martin Luther's answer to a similar question may be worth quoting. When asked "what God may have been doing in the long eternity before the creation of the world," his reply was: He was sitting in a birch-grove and was cutting rods to chastise those who raise such useless questions.

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are an inseparable whole. The Old Testament Scriptures are the foundation, the foreshadowing and promise of the New. The New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old. Insofar as the precepts of the Old Testament were intended for pre-Messianic times alone, they are not applicable to the Christian church. But the fact remains and cannot be too strongly emphasized, though God's revelation in Scripture is of a progressive character, that the whole Bible is God's inspired Word.

III

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Representatives of the new theology sometimes say, their religious thought is founded on experience. This, it must be admitted, is an impressive claim. Experience is a matter not to be trifled with, unless it has to do with trifling things. Obviously an experience may be of great or little value, depending entirely on its nature and content, that is to say, on the question what it is that has been experienced. When we are told that a religion is established on experience, we first of all ask for definitions. What do the representatives of religious liberalism mean when they speak of religion and religious experience?

There is a host of liberal religionists in our day to whom religion is nothing more than a means to social welfare. The late Auguste Sabatier, Dean of the Protestant faculty of theology in the University of Paris, a notable leader of liberal religious thought, wrote a large volume in defence of what he speaks of as "the religion of the spirit." And what would you suppose is his definition of the religion of the spirit which he advocated? It is, according to his own words, altruism. Professor Josiah Royce, of Harvard University, taught that Christianity is simply a sentiment of loyalty. Professor Edward Scribner Ames says,[1] "Religion is an extraordinary enthusiasm for a cause." Many writers have, as we shall see elsewhere,

[1] *The New Orthodoxy*, p. 94.

explained religion to be nothing beyond morality. Professor Roy Wood Sellars, of the University of Michigan, gives this definition: "Religion is loyalty to the values of life." This writer explains that any one who "throws himself whole-heartedly into some field," such as Socialism, art, etc., "has found that concrete and living salvation which ideal effort always brings to man. He is filled with the spirit of consuming loyalty to what he values."[2]

In the opinion of these writers religion is nothing more than endeavor for social welfare, altruism, morality, loyalty, enthusiasm. Now it is true that experience has proven the desirability of these things. Every person of sound mind, be he Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, pagan, rationalist, or what not, will admit that these qualities are to be desired; that they are better than their opposites. This is apparent to every one of common sense. As far as we are aware we have no score with liberalism on this point. The point on which we differ is, that we do not recognize these qualities as the essence of Christianity. If faith in these things were the sum and substance of the Christian faith, it would follow that intelligent people the world over are, wittingly or unwittingly, representatives of the Christian religion. If Christian experience were nothing beyond the conviction that these qualities are desirable, why speak of Christian experience at all?

It may be worth while, in passing, to notice that the definitions of religion offered by modern liberalism show the truth of the words of a prominent modernist who said: "Ours is a time of religious confusion and upheaval." Sometimes a comparison of such definitions with other statements of the same writers brings striking evidence of

[2] *The Next Step in Religion*, p. 221.

the existing confusion. Take for example Dr. Ames' definition of religion as "an extraordinary enthusiasm for a cause." This author says in another instance: "It is commonly accepted today that man is incurably religious;"[3] yet it is not probable that, in Professor Ames' opinion, man is incurably given to a cause. Again it is not clear how man can be said to be incurably religious, if the view of modern psychologists is accepted, viz., that man's soul is only a development of the animal "mind" and that there is no specific religious instinct. We are told by representatives of religious liberalism, that "religious instinct consists rather in a particular direction and organization of the various instinctive capacities for social living."[4] If this view of the liberalistic religious psychologists is accepted it is difficult to see, we repeat, how man can be supposed to be incurably religious.

Dr. George Willis Cooke, a noted liberalistic theologian has recently published a large book on *The Social Evolution of Religion* in which he defines religion as "the trend and aim of our present collective mind." Professor Roy Wood Sellars, as we have seen, defines religion as loyalty. This writer says further: "Such attitudes and expectations as prayer, worship, immortality, providence [i. e. God], are expressions of the pre-scientific view of the world. But as man partly out-grows, partly learns to reject the primitive thought of the world, this perspective and these elements will drop from religion."[5] Here, then, is godless,

---

[3] *The New Orthodoxy*, p. 10.

[4] Coe, *A Social Theory of Religious Education*, p. 141.

[5] *The Next Step in Religion*, p. 6. Professor Sellars is a member of the Unitarian Church. He was one of the principal speakers at the Annual Western Unitarian Conference, held in May, 1920, in Minneapolis.

prayerless, spiritless, earthly, materialistic religion — confusion forsooth.

Albrecht Ritschl, the father of the new theology, held that the Christian religion (as he taught it) is established on experience. His views on the points under consideration have been accepted by many representatives of the religious liberalism. It is therefore in order to inquire more closely into his position. As has been pointed out elsewhere, he denied not only the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures and the deity of Christ, but also the plan of salvation, as taught in Scripture. He disowned the most essential fundamentals of the Christian faith. He reduced the Christian religion to morality; he made morality the center and constructed his theology from the point of view of ethics. Nevertheless he appealed to religious experience as his authority for what he held to be the Christian religion. Ritschl defended strange ideas, however, concerning the nature of Christian experience, though he would found his theology on it. Since he disowned the deity of Christ, he rejected the idea of an immediate relation to Christ for the Christian. He expressly disowned the thought of entering into such relation by personal faith, or conversion. He held that a belief of having personally obtained grace and salvation through Christ was out of place. In short, a real personal relation to God and having fellowship with Him (I John 1:3) he believed to be "mysticism" which he bitterly detested. Sifted down to its substance, Ritschl and his followers believe Christian experience to be a conviction of the excellency of morality. No one doubts the desirability of morality, but the question remains: Does such a conviction deserve the name of Christian experience?

A noteworthy article under the title of *The Religion of Experience* has been published by a Unitarian clergyman.

The article is remarkable because it is a striking illustration of the incredibly elusive and deceptive way in which the term religious experience is used by modern liberalists. The writer of the said article declares that religion should be based, not upon God but "upon the strength and worth of man," and that man should realize "that all that he has is the result of his own effort." Man should "not depend upon some supernatural power for wisdom, or recognize this power as the source of all his blessings." Now this writer asserts further that the view which he defends — which in plain words is rank atheism — *"is the universal experience of man throughout the ages."*[6] Of such a position it must be said that it is religion and religious experience gone mad.

The fact has often been overlooked that man is an essentially religious being. One of the modern theological writers has said, as already noted, than man is incurably religious. If this is true, as it probably is, it follows that every man has some sort of religious experiences, be they ever so worthless. The most degraded pagan has some satisfaction from his religion. He has a feeling of uneasiness unless he follows his erring conscience. The reason is that his conscience, though originally God-given, has become a tool of the powers of darkness. Most Christian believers will realize that before their conversion they were not without religious sentiments and feeling. It is a generally known fact that there are Christian professors who are not really Christians at heart, but they may have religious experiences of some sort.

Though man is naturally religious and hence has naturally some sort of religious experiences, be they ever so

---

[6] *The Christian Register,* March 13, 1919, p. 1.

vague, it does not follow that his natural religious faculties will enable him to ascertain the saving divine truth and find the way of salvation. The fact is that the most religious persons are often spiritually blind, as witness the zeal of some of the heathen devotees of India and other lands. In consequence of man's natural sinfulness the powers of darkness are playing havoc with his natural religiousness and religious experiences. Therefore religious experiences, based on natural "universal" religion, do not furnish an adequate foundation for establishing religious truth. Any religious experimenting on the basis of mere natural religion does not bring satisfactory results. The vital religious questions cannot be solved in this way.

Modern religious liberalism undertakes, by the study of religion from a natural viewpoint, and experimenting along the line of religious psychology, to establish religious truth. The results are destructive even to natural religion. The most thorough-going liberalists now, as we have seen, identify religion with morality. They disown all religion except in so far as they give to morality the name of religion. The study of natural religion for the purpose of finding a foundation or norm for religious truth is the wrong thing also for the reason that such experimenting implies an attitude of doubt or indifference toward God's Word.

To doubt the Christian truth is always the wrong course. Be the doubter ever so honest, the fact remains that doubting the truth regarding salvation leads into darkness, not into light. Hence the necessity of differentiating between experimental and experiental religion or, in other words, between religious experimenting and Christian experience.

Christian experience, to be worthy of the name, presupposes Christian faith. Such experience is excluded

where the fundamentals of the faith are treated with indifference, or denied. Discounting the truth of the Gospel makes Christian experience impossible. Deny the deity of Christ and the Atonement and you destroy the possibility of true Christian experience. Again, accept the Gospel message unreservedly and you will experience a great change of mind and heart. If your faith is steadfast, the reality of this change will become more and more clear to you. The change is the result of personal faith in Jesus Christ — not of following a natural impulse but of giving heed to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. It is not mere development of natural religious powers, but is of a supernatural character — not your own work but the work of God.

Christian experience, then, is the consciousness of a supernatural personal relation to God, the realization of being right with God, being His child, through the great work of Christ. Let no one suppose that this means simply belief in the popular doctrine of the fatherhood of God. On the contrary, it means a realization of the contrast between being God's child by regeneration and being His child in the sense as taught by modern theology, namely in the sense that you were His child before your conversion. True Christian experience brings the firm conviction of the reality of the great redemption wrought by Christ; of the reality of personal salvation through Him. No rational consideration can go behind the experience of this continuous blessed relation to the Father through Jesus Christ which cannot be adequately described, no more than other spiritual realities.

Christian experience results in victory over sin, as well as victory over the adverse experiences, disappointments and tragedies of human life. And this is a point on which modern liberalism is totally failing. We quote here a remark-

able statement by Dean Fenn, of the Divinity School, Harvard University, a Unitarian minister. He says:

> We must seriously raise the question whether [religious] liberalism can bear the weight of the tragedies of human experience. Does not its amiable faith in inherent goodness appear but ghastly mockery when confronted by the facts of life?....A religious doctrine which cannot bear the weight of the heart-breaking disasters of life will prove a broken reed piercing the hand of him who leans upon it. Every fall is a fall upward — tell that to a man who by his own sin has fallen from a position of honor and power into deep and damning disgrace.[7]

While the message of religious liberalism, with its impotent God of law and natural force, is but "ghastly mockery" to him who seeks salvation from sin and divine power to uphold him in the crushing experiences of life, the acceptance of the Christian message, on the other hand, (resulting in Christian experience) is fully adequate to his needs. The actual realization of the living God and of a blessed personal relation to Him necessarily brings the conviction that He is doing the very best for His child even in the disappointments which He may permit to befall him; and that trials will in the end result in great blessing, if they are borne as they ought.

This answers also the question, How may I know that the Bible is God's Word? Liberalism says, you should treat the Bible not as a divine message but as any human book. The new theology proposes that we examine the Bible, one part after another, in a critical spirit, to find whether it is acceptable. This means that you should appoint yourself a judge over the Bible, instead of approaching it with a willingness to be judged by it. Christian faith, on the contrary, says: If your own brains were sufficient to enable you to find the way of life and accomplish your own salvation without

---

[7] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1913, p. 516.

supernatural divine aid; if you were able to set up a standard by which the Bible is to be judged, there would be no need for the Scriptures.

The Bible comes to you with a message. The message, if true, is of incomparable value. You are called upon to experience the truth of the message. It consists of truths, or doctrines, concerning God and His nature, man and his condition, the way of salvation, etc. You are bidden to believe and fully accept the message. There are excellent reasons for believing that the message is true. The most convincing reason, perhaps, is that Christianity will do for you what it claims to do. If you are conscious of personal sin and of an unsatisfactory relation to God, Christianity offers a way for fully removing the burden of sin and guilt and giving you a deep consciousness of a vital relationship to God, the relation of a child to his loving father. The Christian message points out a way to make you abound in all the fruits of the Spirit. You will be enabled to lead a life of victory over sin and over the adverse conditions and failures of life. When the real tests come which prove the modern conceptions of God and of religion to be utterly inadequate, Christianity will make you "more than conqueror." It will turn your defeats into victories. It will make you the stronger spiritually and morally for adverse experiences.

True Christian experience will also cure you of the worldly-wise idea that the endeavor to improve social conditions is the essence of Christianity and is of greater importance than maintaining the proper personal relationship to God and bringing others into such relationship. Unless your Christian faith is mere show and pretence, you will clearly see that it is the greatest treasure which you possess. You would willingly give your earthly possessions and social

advantages for your faith. You are fully convinced that you can render no greater service to your fellow-man than to get him to accept the Christian message and enjoy the blessings of salvation. It will become clear to you that working for the personal conversion of men is the most important service you can render to the community and to society—that above all else society needs truly converted Christians to prevent the destruction and chaos that is threatening it.

IV

RELIGIOUS CERTAINTY CONSIDERED FROM THE LIBERAL POINT OF VIEW

Speaking of Christian assurance we have, as in the instance of Christian experience, again before us the question of the nature of Christianity. We have seen that modern liberalism in general offers an ethical interpretation of Christianity. The essence of Christianity is held to be morality. If this view were correct, Christian assurance would simply mean the certainty that morality is a good thing. Concerning this there can be no question. While it is supposed by representatives of religious liberalism that, considered from their own viewpoint, all moral and religious truth is relative, or in other words, there is no absolute moral truth, yet it is a fact that all reasonable men and women agree on the desirability of general morality.

Among the modernists who accept the ethical interpretation of religion, believing that morality is the one essential thing, there are those—as for example the Societies for Ethical Culture—who do not desire to be known as religious, or Christian, and have done away with all theology. Others again, namely the representatives of the so-called liberal Christianity, claim to be religious and approve of some sort of theology, or some modern substitute for the-

ology. It may be safely said that the ethical culture societies never speak of religious assurance, and we may assume that, as this term is used by representatives of the so-called liberal Christianity, it refers to the assurance they leave for their theology. For though the message of the more radically liberalistic churches does not appreciably differ from that of the societies for moral culture, the liberalistic churches hold fast to the Christian name and hence cannot consistently renounce all Christian theology. Their theology may be thoroughly modernized, that is to say, they may reject all the fundamentals of the Christian faith and treat all questions of doctrine and theology as entirely secondary and non-essential, nevertheless they have a right to the name of a religious society only to the extent that they adhere to some sort of theology. The Unitarians and other religious liberals, in passing, are inconsistent on the question of theology. On the one hand it is their boast to have no theology, and on the other they maintain theological seminaries, they engage in public worship and desire to be recognized as religious societies. Without any doubt, when liberalists speak of religious assurance, they have reference to the question what assurance there may be for their theology.

There is no need of dwelling here further on the fact that all religious liberals are agreed in the rejection of the inspiration and authority of Scripture. Disowning the Scriptures, they cannot consistently fall back on Scripture as an authority for a theology which they may defend. Now a generation or less ago the representatives of the new theology generally accepted religious experience as a substitute for Scripture authority. They held that religious experience is sufficient ground or authority for modern theology. However, to accept this view is to frankly admit to

be agnostic ("not knowing") about all that lies beyond the range of experience. "As a result," says President McGiffert, of Union Theological Seminary, *"agnosticism touching many matters, formerly deemed fundamental,* has come to be the common attitude on the part of religious men; and even of theologians."[1]

In more recent years the leaders of religious liberalism have been led to realize the impossibility of building a theology on religious experience. Says Professor Gerald Birney Smith, of the University of Chicago:

> But further reflection showed that experience cannot be taken simply as a store house from which permanent conclusions may be drawn.[2] — When the appeal to religious experience is acted upon, there emerge certain perplexities which are somewhat confusing. Whose "experience" shall we take as the source of our religious exposition? What is to prevent the agnostic from setting up his "experience" as the norm?....Where, now, is the true experience to be found?[3]

Other liberalistic religious leaders have expressed themselves to the same effect. They confessedly realize that religious experience is not an adequate ground for theology. Now, since they have eliminated both Scripture and experience as a religious authority, what, then, is the foundation for the new theology? The answer is that there is no adequate foundation and, strange as it may seem, not a few modern theologians have asserted that their theology really needs no foundation. They say, as has been pointed out, the new theology is in essence a method rather than a system of doctrine. They are of the opinion that there is no absolute religious truth, which means that there is no religious truth that is true in itself, true under all circumstances

---

[1] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1916, p. 325. Italics mine.
[2] The same, 1910, p. 217.
[3] The same, 1912, p. 594.

and conditions. All religious truth, they say, is relative or subjective, meaning that it is in fact not true, though for practical purposes it is considered well to let it pass. Theology, therefore, is to be used rather than accepted as true. Hence the question of religious assurance is superfluous. Indeed there is no occasion to speak of assurance with reference to a proposition that is not claimed to be true. The question whether a religiousness which confessedly lacks assurance or evidence may prove satisfactory to those who accept it, is left to the reader's consideration.

Lest it be supposed that we are overstating the case and that it is impossible that intelligent people accept a proposition which is, by its own advocates, not supposed to be true, a number of liberalistic writers are further quoted on the point in question. A well-informed writer points out that "the view of truth as purely personal or relative" is largely accepted today.[4] "We have come to a place where the very life of religion is threatened by a sickening sense of relativism," says a writer in a prominent theological magazine.[5] Dean Fenn, of Harvard University, testifies: That the acceptance of the liberalistic view of Jesus "is incompatible with religious certainty and finality, the liberal is perfectly well aware."[6] "Liberalism can develop a consistently strong position" said a speaker in a liberal religious congress, "only as a basis of faith shall be discovered" aside from the basis of evangelical faith.[7] Professor Gerald Birney Smith points out that "there is no more fundamental need today" than that a way be found of formulating religious faith anew; and in the same connection he speaks

[4] *The Unpopular Review,* July-September, 1918, p. 100.
[5] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1916, p. 84.
[6] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1913, p. 514.
[7] The same, 1911, p. 499.

of "a burden that is fast becoming unendurable."[8] The same author speaks of "the agony of uncertainty which is so prevalent in our day."[9] He says further: "But thoughtful men and conscientious people are painfully aware that as yet nothing of a strong, positive character has come to take the place of the older type of theology."[10] This author, though here he desires something "of a strong, positive character" has in other instances used language showing that he agrees with Professor Roy Wood Sellars who says: *"The church must give up the idea that it can teach final truth on any subject,....*the ministers cannot give a final statement about anything."[11] Therefore, so Professor Sellars argues, the church should devote itself to purely humanitarian endeavors. (Compare p. 236 of the present book).

Clearly, then, the new theology is devoid of the most important part, namely a foundation. Could there be a more striking evidence of its secondary non-vital character? And must it not be assumed that people who do their own thinking will eventually realize the unreasonableness of such a theology? An American President is credited with the saying that "you cannot fool the people all the time." But some of the modern theologians *are seeking* a foundation for their position. And what sort of a foundation do they seek? Evidently not one of supernatural character, for they, in principle, reject supernaturalism inclusive of divine revelation as given in Scripture. The attempt to find a foundation, outside of Scripture, for the shreds of Christian theology which they may desire to maintain, is evidently futile. Science is silent on the points in question. The

---

[8] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 549.

[9] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1912, p. 607.

[10] The same, p. 606.

[11] *The Christian Register,* July 29, 1920, p. 7 seq. Italics mine.

hope that something may "turn up" which may serve this purpose is indeed pathetic. It is not unlike the expectation of the shepherd who came to a goldsmith to inquire about the value of a big lump of gold. Asked if he had one, he replied, no, but he hoped to find one. How strange that in an age which boasts of its enlightenment there are those who will accept a theology which its representatives are laboring to maintain without a foundation.

It has been shown elsewhere that there is a close connection between Christian assurance and the experience of salvation in the Bible sense. However the fact needs emphasis that Christian experience is made possible only through God's Word. Various writers have expressed the opinion that the nature and interpretation of religious experience is a secondary matter and that any one who claims to have some sort of experience through Christ is to be given the hand of fellowship, without regard to his position as to doctrinal points. But so long as Scripture teaching concerning personal salvation is to be taken seriously, the fact must be recognized that Christian experience, to be genuine, must be based on the fundamental truths concerning the person and work of Christ. If He is not the divine Savior in the Biblical sense; if the Bible doctrine of the Atonement and salvation through Christ is not true to fact — or, in other words, if these truths are denied — then there cannot be true Christian experience though there may be religious experience of some sort. Therefore the assertion that experience alone is the important matter without regard to the interpretation or meaning of such experience, is unacceptable. It is generally known that there are those who, while repudiating the fundamentals of the faith, profess Christian experience. It is, therefore, necessary to inquire into their interpretation or

definition of experience: Is it of a scriptural character? The foundation of Christian assurance is God's Word which is confirmed by Christian experience.

V

PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

Philosophy may be defined as the attempt to ascertain, without the aid of divine revelation, the truth concerning man, his existence, his relation to the universe and his destiny. Philosophy, it is worthy of notice, is older than the Christian religion. The famous philosophers Plato and Aristotle, of Greece, lived in the fourth century B. C. Among modern philosophers Henri Bergson, of France, and Rudolf Eucken, of Germany, deserve mention. The most striking thing about philosophy, perhaps, is the great variety of opinion among its representatives or, in other words, the unreliability of their conclusions. Says Leslie Stephens:

> State any one proposition in which all philosophers agree, and I will admit it to be true; or any one that has a manifest balance of authority, and I will agree that it is probable. But so long as every philosopher flatly contradicts the principles of his predecessors, why affect certainty?

The father of modern philosophy, the Frenchman Descartes (1596-1650), owes his fame to a theory of knowledge which he defended. According to this theory the true basis for philosophy is man's self-consciousness. Descartes doubted everything except his own existence. From the

basis of his existence and self-consciousness he attempted to prove the existence of God and the external world. He made his own self-consciousness — i. e. himself — the center and basis of all. All existence, he believed, is mental and what is not known does not exist. He actually supposed that what he did not apprehend had no existence. This strange theory has been accepted by philosophers in general.[1] But from this starting point they have arrived at a great diversity of conclusions. Inadequate as such a foundation seems, there is, apparently, no better one for a structure which in principle rejects divine revelation, as does philosophy.

Philosophy, it should be noticed, cannot take the place of the Scriptures as a basis for the Christian faith. This fact is recognized by philosophers in general. Christian theology, or, in other words, the statement of the Christian faith, is founded on divine revelation as given in Scripture. Scripture, being divinely inspired, is the one true basis for theology. And without the acceptance of divine revelation and without Scriptural theology, a church worthy of the Christian name could not be maintained. Philosophy, even if it be the so-called philosophy of religion, could not take the place of theology for the church.

The assertion has been made, by the more moderate of the representatives of the new theology, that the individual religious feeling, or the religious consciousness, can be made the foundation for a Christian theology. In other words, just as philosophy is based on self-consciousness, so the attempt is made to establish a theology — or, more correctly, a religious philosophy — on *religious* self-con-

[1] Concerning this theory of knowledge and its uncertainty compare Santayana, *Winds of Doctrine*, pp. 13, 40, 55; *Anglican Theological Review*, vol. I, p. 50.

sciousness. This means that Scripture authority is to be superseded by the principle that each man should be a law and authority unto himself. But it is clearly impossible to build a Christian theology on no other ground than religious consciousness. It is hardly necessary to repeat here that religious conceptions and consciousness may be unsound and deceptive. Not even upon *Christian* religious consciousness alone could a Christian theology be established, and it is quite out of the question to establish it upon *non-Christian* religious consciousness. This means that to reject the Scriptures as the authoritative record of divine revelation is to discard the only valid foundation for Christian theology. The new theology, rejecting the authority of Scripture, is without an adequate foundation, as will be further shown elsewhere.

The content of Christian theology is Christian doctrine or dogma. Generally speaking dogma is doctrine based on authority, rather than on direct proof. Christian dogma is the doctrine of the Christian church founded on God's Word. The modern aversion to Christian dogma is due to the rejection of the authority of Scripture. Obviously the consistent thing for the religious liberalists, who deny the inspiration of Scripture, is to reject all dogmatic teaching and ascribe to doctrine little, if any importance. It is worthy of notice that science, except in so far as it accepts the Scripture record, is not consistent if it offers dogmatic teaching.

One of the characteristics of the new theology is that no doctrine is held to be essential, or as a dogma. Christian doctrine is either rejected outright, or treated as a secondary matter. Professor Gerald Birney Smith shows that the older liberalism rejected all dogmas except three, namely the doctrines of God, freedom of the will, and im-

mortality. Then this writer proceeds to say that the new theology does not hold to any dogma whatever.[2] Neither the three dogmas just mentioned nor any other are considered essential to the modern religious liberalism. "There is still altogether too much of the older feeling," says Professor Smith, "that the result of Biblical study should be to establish an absolutely true and unchanging system of theology."[3] "A new theology of this dogmatic sort," he says further, "would not really mark much advance."[4]

It may sound unbelievable but it is a fact that the religious liberalists hold the method of theology, rather than its contents, to be of principal importance. Professor Smith insists that the new theology is a method rather than doctrine or a doctrinal system.[5] Professor John Wright Buckham, of the Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, Cal., says: "It is not doctrine at all, whether old or new, that is fundamental, but faith."[6] What is meant by "faith," however, as the word is used here by this author, is impossible to know. Professor Herbert A. Youtz, of Oberlin Theological Seminary, a representative of modern theology, says: "We evoke Jesus' authority, not to justify our *form* of faith but rather to justify the faith itself."[7] One of the Unitarian periodicals, according to the testimony of its editor, stands for faith but "not faith in any particular thing [doctrine] about which others may have their doubt, but *faith in faith itself*."[8] So the new theology does not advocate a par-

---

[2] *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology,* p. 190.
[3] The same, p. 200.
[4] The same, p. 201.
[5] The same, p. 201. *The Biblical World,* October, 1914, p. 275.
[6] *The Biblical World,* April, 1915, p. 215.
[7] *The Enlarging Conception of God,* 1914, p. 148.
[8] *The Christian Register,* April 3, 1919.

ticular doctrine, or form of faith, but "faith itself." Such statements may seem profound to the unthinking but, unless "faith itself" is defined and has a real meaning, these statements do not mean anything worth while. For illustration: the Unitarian church paper just mentioned, though professing to stand for "faith itself," opens its columns to those who flatly deny the very existence of God — an evidence that "faith itself," as used by the said editor, does not refer to the Christian faith.

Many new theology writers have expressed the opinion that definite doctrine and theology is a matter of very little if any, consequence. Professor George Cross, of Rochester Theological Seminary, for example, thinks "there is something of greater worth to Christian churches than the doctrinal beliefs they hold."[9] Says Lyman Abbott: "There is as little danger of undermining religion by new [modern] definitions of theology as there is of blotting out the stars from the heavens by a new astronomy."[10] "If we seek to keep Christian doctrine unchanged," says Walter Rauschenbusch, "we shall ensure its abandonment."[11] And again this writer says: "The saving power of the church does not rest on its doctrine."[12] A Unitarian minister points out that he ceased to believe the inerrancy of the Scriptures, the deity of Christ and the personality of God. "Little by little it dawned upon me," he observes further, "that faith is not founded on beliefs about things. *Faith is founded on the essential structure of the universe, and is an essential characteristic of man and of all other life.*"[13] Dr. John

[9] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1919, p. 143.
[10] *The Theology of an Evolutionist,* 1897, p. 3.
[11] *A Theology for the Social Gospel,* p. 7.
[12] The same, p. 129.
[13] *The Christian Register,* October 31, 1918, p. 12. Italics mine.

Herman Randall, until recently a Baptist minister, says: "My own conviction is that if all the creeds and dogmas and paraphernalia of the churches in Christendom today could be set aside.....nothing would be lost."[14] "Dogma is dead," says the editor of a prominent paper. Many liberalistic writers have expressed themselves similarly. "For a generation now we have been preaching that experience is the great thing, and not creed;...we are losing the creed that alone can produce an experience higher than the vagaries of idiosyncracy," writes the British theologian P. F. Forsyth.[15]

Now, if doctrine is of secondary importance; if *method* instead of doctrine and truth is the principal thing in Christian theology, it follows that there cannot be anything that may be spoken of as the essence of Christianity in any real sense. This is freely admitted by representatives of religious liberalism. To ask what is the essence of Christianity, thinks Professor Shirley Jackson Case of the University of Chicago, is to show that you misconceive the real nature of the modern religion.[16] It has no essence, no real, absolute truth, either as concerns religion, or morals.[17] In our rapidly changing civilization, says Professor Gerald Birney Smith, "absolutes are out of place."[18] This means that liberalism has no positive teachings. The denial of all positive religious thought is, in fact, the principal characteristic of modern liberalism. The consequence

---

[14] *The Biblical World,* April, 1916, p. 268.

[15] *The London Quarterly Review,* vol. 123, p. 194.

[16] *The Christian Register,* April 18, 1918, p. 15. *The American Journal of Theology,* 1913, p. 541.

[17] Compare pp. 48 and 236 of the present book.

[18] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 558.

is that the church, to the extent that it has been liberalized, has become an agency to spread agnosticism.

A number of years ago, Dr. Arthur Sachs, Professor in the University of Breslau, a Jew, wrote:

> Every liberalistic religion carries in its bosom the germ of death. A religion without dogma is a creature of the imagination which under no circumstances is able to give to individual man, much less to the human family, the necessary anchor-hold in this life and the hope for perfection in the beyond. At the moment it becomes "liberal," it begins to degrade into a mere philosophy. No system of philosophy has yet been able to satisfy the supernatural longings of man, and we may confidently prophesy that philosophy will always fail in this respect, for every philosophy originates in the human brain while religion represents a gracious divine revelation.

Modern religious liberalism has really only one dogma and consequently knows just one heresy. Liberalism denies the opinion that there is positive religious truth. From this viewpoint a person is heretical to the extent that he may believe that there is absolute religious truth. But this new dogma is unreasonable. When liberalists say, there is no positive religious truth, they make an assertion which is absolutely incapable of proof. Clearly this position is one of unreasonable dogmatism. Professor Gerald Birney Smith has rightly said that negative dogmatism is "as unjustified as positive dogmatism."[19] A Christian teacher or minister who teaches nothing dogmatic concerning the Christian fundamentals takes the position that there is no absolute truth as to these points. Such a teacher stands for negative dogmatism while positive dogma is not acceptable to him. This negative dogmatism it quite common in liberalistic circles. John H. Holmes says rightfully: "Even those radical churches which have freed themselves from

[19] The same, p. 539.

all theological bonds, have gone to the other extreme of setting up *a structure of denial which is just as exclusive as any of the creeds of Christendom.*"[20]

Not a few liberalistic theologians have thought that loyalty to Jesus is the one thing essential and is a substitute for Christian theology. But loyalty to Jesus does not necessarily mean a religious attitude. Some of the anti-religious, atheistic Socialists of Europe profess loyalty to Jesus. They believe Him to have been a great social reformer. "The social gospel arouses a fresh and warm loyalty to Christ wherever it goes, though not always a loyalty to the church," says Walter Rauschenbusch; "it is believed by trinitarians and unitarians alike."[21] But can there be loyalty to Christ without a recognition of His divine nature? True loyalty to Him is based on the truth regarding Him, or in other words, on theology. This is generally denied in modern liberalistic circles. President McGiffert, for example, says: "I am not talking here of the origin and nature of Jesus Christ....All this is of secondary importance."[22] On the contrary, Principal Alfred Ernest Garvie, of New College, London, has well said: "The doctrine of the deity of Christ has been much under debate in recent years. The Christian church cannot accept the denial of that doctrine [that is to say the church cannot turn Unitarian] without the sacrifice of its inmost life."[23] Dr. Henry W. Clark says: "Christ's revelation has now been minimized down to a few inspiring ideas and His work reduced to be the application of these ideas, by word

---

[20] *Unity,* May 22, 1919, p. 140.

[21] *A Theology for the Social Gospel,* p. 148.

[22] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1911, p. 6.

[23] *The Christian Certainty Amid the Modern Perplexity,* 1910, p. 38.

and example, to the lives of men."[24] In other words, the setting aside of creed and theology has robbed the church (in so far as the church has been liberalized) of its divine Christ. Of the Redeemer, by atonement, it has made a savior by teaching, leaving it to every man to redeem himself by following the ideal.

Notwithstanding all that liberalists have said in disparagement of doctrine and creed they must be aware that the shreds of Christian theology which they have retained are their only ground for their claim to the Christian name. If they discarded all theological pretense, their lot would not differ from that of the Ethical Culture Societies. Pathetic indeed it is to see the representatives of modern religious liberalism bending their energies upon finding a foundation, or an excuse, for some sort of theology to which they may lay claim. They have thought that such an excuse could be found in the fact that they treat all matters of doctrine as secondary, unimportant.

But to teach Christian doctrine as a secondary matter is clearly unjustifiable. Take for example the doctrine of Christ, His person and His work, as taught in Scripture. If this doctrine is true, if Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has come into the world to make atonement for the sin of the world, then this is the most stupendous fact in history. Were it not true, we should be compelled to say it is the greatest of falsehoods. It is impossible to treat this doctrine as a secondary matter. If it be not accepted, it must be rejected. The same is true of other doctrines, such as that of God, of the plan of salvation, of the immortality of the soul, and of Bible doctrine in general.

It may, of course, be replied that liberalistic theology

---

[24] *Liberal Orthodoxy*, 1914, p. 285.

is substantially a denial of the doctrines of Christianity and what liberalists have retained of Christianity has been revolutionized and modernized. But such denial and "modernization," even if it were justifiable, is not a secondary matter; it is obviously a matter of primary concern. Furthermore, since the theology which modern liberalists teach has no essential doctrines, it cannot be of any real worth. Indeed a theology which holds its own doctrines as secondary, non-vital opinions, and which teaches that the church should doctrinally not stand for anything specific and should have no doctrinal test — such a theology cannot be taken seriously. In the eyes of those who do their own thinking it is a creation of human dreams. A theology of such nature is destined to fail in its self-appointed task of successfully apologizing for its own pitiable existence.

VI

THE FATHERS OF THE NEW THEOLOGY

The German theologian Schleiermacher (1768-1834) is generally held to be the principal forerunner of the new theology. Strange as his particular teachings may appear to us, religious liberalism considers Schleiermacher one of the greatest theologians. The reason is that he was the first Christian teacher whose system of theology makes Bible authority superfluous. He taught that knowledge and belief are not vital to religion; hence the acceptance of the Bible is not essential; there is no real need of it. The proper foundation for religion, or religious truth is, in his opinion, not the Scriptures but the natural religious consciousness or feeling. Not only did he exclude belief from the sphere of religion but he held that action also does not really belong to it. Feeling is, in his opinion, the one essential thing in religion. Notwithstanding Schleiermacher and the host of those who recognize him as a theological leader, the fact remains that religion, when it lacks knowledge and acceptance of the truth, on one hand, and a consistent life, on the other, is an exceedingly weak thing, if it is not a mighty instrument of evil.

Albrecht Ritschl, the father of the new theology (1822-1889) did not accept Schleiermacher's thought that feeling is the one thing in religion that is essential. However, he agreed with Schleiermacher on the point that feeling, in-

stead of the Scriptures, is the foundation for religious faith, or the source of religious truth. He teaches that the facts on which theology is based are to be sought in religious consciousness or feeling, and nowhere else. As for the Scriptures he denied their inspiration and authority. The follower of Ritschl seeks God and theological truth in himself. He says, he finds "an indefinite and indefinable feeling which he believes to be God." He thinks, it can be rightfully said that God is good and hence God must be personal, for only a person could be good. Ritschl, therefore, teaches the existence of a personal God. Fundamental as this doctrine is, it is not an exclusively Christian teaching; there are other religious systems, such as the Jewish and Mohammedan, that teach the personality of God.

Ritschl rejected the deity of Christ but thought that Jesus was a religious genius, a religious hero who had progressed so far in moral and spiritual attainments that he has to the Christian "the value of God." But the idea that someone or something that is not God should have the value of God is unacceptable from the Christian viewpoint; it is, on the contrary, distinctly pagan. Ritschl speaks of Jesus as divine but flatly denies His divine nature. He also denies His miraculous birth, His miracles, His resurrection. On the atonement of Christ he wrote a large work in which he defends a doctrine which leaves out the cardinal points of the substitutional sacrifice of Christ. The immortality of the soul is treated in his theology as an indifferent matter.

The most objectionable feature of Ritschlianism is its twofacedness. It uses the old words and names with new meanings; the negative liberal thought is clothed in the old orthodox expressions. It comes in the old garb but in content and meaning it differs radically from the old doctrines. The real differences between Ritschlianism and the old Bible

faith are in substance and content, rather than in form and appearance. While retaining a semblance of Christian theology, Christian doctrine is either substantially changed or rejected outright. In a word, it is a denial of the essential Christian truth coming in the cloak of a pious vocabulary. The most notable representative of Ritschlianism in America was William Newton Clarke.

In more recent years a new and more radical type of the new theology has come into vogue, called the historical, or historico-religious, method. The representatives of this radical rejection of Christian truth agree with Schleiermacher and Ritschl in disowning the Scriptures as an authority or source of religious truth. Instead of taking religious consciousness or feeling for their starting point, however, they make the general history of the religions of the world the point from which Christianity is to be explained. They start from the supposition that, just as the pagan religious systems are the product of natural growth and evolution, Christianity also, as well as Judaism, is a natural development and not the result of a supernatural divine revelation. If Christianity be better than some other religions, they say, the difference is in degree and not in kind. Not only do they deny the specific truths of the Christian religion but they reject the supernatural. They abandon religious thought so far as it has to do with the supernatural. While the Ritschlians think they find God within themselves, the most advanced representatives of the historical method have a pantheistic conception of God. They teach that the human mind is a part of God and that God is immanent in the world in such manner that it is impossible to distinguish between God and man. They believe, therefore, what the Ritschlian finds in himself and supposes to be God is only his own mind and feeling.

It is worthy of notice that this most advanced type of the new theology has to no small extent discarded the vocabulary of Christian doctrine or theology. Some of its representatives frankly admit that the theological counterfeiting of the more conservative new theology men is uncalled-for. One of the leading men representing the historical method is Professor Troeltsch, of Berlin. In the liberalistic seminaries Ritschlianism is giving place to radical liberalism. Says Dean Shailer Mathews, "Barring a few significant exceptions, theological seminaries throughout the Protestant world are committed to the historico-critical study of the Bible."[1]

In general it may be said that the more moderate liberals represent some type of Ritschlian theology while the more radical representatives of liberalism follow the so-called historical method.

[1] *The Biblical World,* November, 1920, p. 554.

VII

THE MODERN DOCTRINE OF DIVINE IMMANENCE

Besides the rejection of the inspiration of the Scriptures the foremost tenet in modern liberalistic theology is the dogma of the immanence of God. We speak of it as a dogma for the reason that the representatives of religious liberalism are quite dogmatic in teaching this unproved theory. The immanence of God means that God is in character not distinct from the world but is a part of the world. God is supposed to be the force or energy which has developed the world through the natural process of evolution. Prayer to God is, without question, uncalled-for where this definition is accepted.

It may be in order here to notice that the Scriptures teach that God is a personal Being or, in other words, a Being possessing will and intelligence. Hence He is immeasurably more than mere force or law. The God whom the Bible reveals is the almighty Creator, Preserver, and Governor of the universe. Instead of the modern doctrine that God is the force or energy pervading nature, the Bible teaches God's omnipresence. This means that God is present and—at least in a degree—active in all parts of the universe. Yet He is transcendent to the universe or, in other words, He is not a part of the universe, but is a per-

sonal Being. Natural law, life-force, etc., is not God but is the result of His creative work. Concerning God's activity in the universe it is clear that He may work through natural causes. Just as man may make nature do his bidding by working in agreement with nature's laws, or by bringing a higher natural law into play where a more inferior law is active, God as the omnipresent almighty Ruler of the universe may to an infinitely greater degree make natural law serve His purposes. And again, He who created nature and its laws may do that which requires more than a direction of natural forces. He may, in a given case, suspend the laws of nature and do that which is superior to and beyond the power of natural law. To say with the critics that the result of any suspension of natural law would under existing conditions mean a greater degree of evil than of good, is to consider the matter from a purely human viewpoint. In God's sight a miracle would not be a miracle if it did not accomplish His purpose or, in other words, if it caused that which is contrary to His plans. As for the divine work of grace in the human heart, it is not the result of the working of the forces of nature. It is of supernatural character, the result of the direct working of God.

Strange to say, modern liberalists have commonly asserted that the Bible teaches an absentee (deistic) God who, after accomplishing the work of creation, left the world to its fate except for some miracles which were comparatively few and far between. This is an example of the unreliability of some of the modern writers. The Bible conception of God is not deistic but emphatically and consistently theistic.

The modern doctrine of divine immanence is founded not on Scripture but on the theory of evolution The thought that God is a part of the world is merely a feature

of evolutionism. President McGiffert, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, it is worthy of notice, testifies that "the modern doctrine of divine immanence owes its prevalence, in part, at least, to the very conception of evolution to which naturalism in theology is largely due."[1] This means that the theory of divine immanence is founded, at least in part, on another mere assumption, namely the modern doctrine of evolution.

The doctrine of divine immanence has revolutionized theology wherever it has been accepted. It means, as has been pointed out in a preceding paragraph, that "God is not thought of as separate from the universe but rather as its immanent law."[2] "The old conception that God . . . is distinct from our human life" must give way to "the religious belief that he is immanent in humanity," says Walter Rauschenbusch.[3] As defined by the late Professor Royce of Harvard University, the content of all finite minds is included in God's own consciousness and will. The individual self is an identical part of the Divine Self.[4] "The divine is no more separate and aloof; it is within and organic with the human."[5] "God is considered as the soul of the world, the spirit animating nature, the universal force which takes the myriad forms of heat, light, gravitation, electricity and the like."[6] In other words, God is merely a sacred name for all existence. "As God is immanent in the life of man, di-

---

[1] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1916, p. 323.

[2] Professor William Adams Brown, in *The Harvard Theological Review*, 1911, p. 16.

[3] Professor Walter Rauschenbusch, in *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 178.

[4] *The Reformed Church Review*, 1917, p. 543.

[5] McGiffert, *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas*, 1915, p. 121.

[6] The same, p. 201.

vine revelation comes from within, not from without," i. e. not from the Bible.[7] The spirit of God is identical with the spirit of man.[8] "In the new theology," says Principal Alfred Ernest Garvie, "the distinction between God and man, which morality and religion alike demand, is confused, if not altogether denied."[9]

The doctrine of divine immanence then means that God and the world are identical—two names for the same thing. God is supposed to be the world-energy, the natural law. It would follow that the whole world is the expression of the divine force. Hence the world throughout, and all that is or takes place, is supposed to be of divine character. There is therefore no room for the Christian conception of sin, nor for a divine plan of salvation. Modern religious liberalism teaches that there is a "unity of force or of substance, making all things the expression of one all-pervading energy or of one all-embracing divine being."[10] "The doctrine of divine immanence, so widely current in these days, has served to bridge the old chasm between nature and the supernatural and to make them completely one."[11]

"The first and most striking characteristic of the new theology," writes Professor William Adams Brown of the Union Theological Seminary, "is its view of the world as a unity. The contrast between nature and the supernatural, which was fundamental for the old theology, has

---

[7] The same, p. 204.

[8] Foster, *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence*, p. 144.

[9] *The Christian Certainty Amid the Moral Perplexity*, p. 138.

[10] McGiffert, *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas*, p. 20.

[11] President McGiffert in *The American Journal of Theology*, 1916, p. 323.

disappeared."[12] Says a theological writer, R. H. Dotterer:

> Liberal theologians have emphasized the immanence of God and have said that *all* events are supernatural, since all are produced by, or are particular expressions of, the immanent God. The difficulty of this procedure is however that, in thus preserving the right to use the *word* God, we are in danger of so impoverishing the idea of God that it becomes of little value as a religious conception.[13]

"Divine immanence" says a modernist writer, "means the surrender of the old view of miracles, and with it of the necessity of believing that such events have happened."[14] In short the doctrine of divine immanence is an arch-enemy of Christian truth.

A number of theologians, e. g. William Newton Clarke, have undertaken to defend the transcendence of God—which means that God is not identical with the world—as well as His immanence. This, however, fails to solve the difficulty. God's immanence, unless the expression is devoid of all signification, means that He is the world energy, the one force in the universe. It means that there is no difference between natural and supernatural; that everything is a miracle of God (or rather that there is no miracle); that all that happens is good, being the result of the great universal law or force. To say that God, besides being immanent, is also transcendent, does not solve these difficulties. The assertion that He is both transcendent and immanent presents the gravest mental obstacles. "Merely to *say* that God is immanent and also to *say* that He is transcendent and personal as well as immanent, does not solve the difficulty," observes Ray H. Dot-

---

[12] *The Harvard Theological Review*, 1911, p. 14.

[13] *The Reformed Church Review*, 1917, p. 546.

[14] *The Hibbert Journal*, July, 1914, p. 739.

terer, "any more than to *say* that a certain geometrical figure is round and *also* has four right angles will remove the self-contradiction from the notion of a square circle."[15]

In an article published in a religious magazine, Bishop Francis J. McConnell points out some, in his opinion, good effects of the doctrine of divine immanence, but thinks the believer in this doctrine "is not always sure of just where to stop," and that there is "but an easy step or rather an easy slip [from this doctrine] to a belief in pantheism which allows no scope for the self-determination of free individuals." "By an easy glide," this writer says, the believer in divine immanence "slips over into the belief that human souls are just flowing forms of divine activity." "Just how to make the distinction here," Bishop McConnell says further, "is a problem for the trained metaphysician, but the distinction must be made, at least practically, if we are to preserve religious values in their moral significance."[16]

In a similar way President McGiffert freely admits the grave obstacles in the way of accepting both the immanence and transcendence of God. He speaks of "the serious difficulties involved in immanence" when the attempt is made to combine it with the Christian belief in God.[17] "Between a God who is beyond the world of matter and a God who is immanent in, and absorbed by, the world of matter, yawns a fatal chasm," says Dr. Henry Berkowitz.[18]

---

[15] *The Reformed Church Review,* 1917, p. 546. The fact must be recognized, however, that immanence is sometimes inaccurately used for omnipresence.

[16] *The Constructive Quarterly,* March, 1913, p. 133.

[17] *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas,* p. 220.

[18] *The Biblical World,* October, 1917, p. 216.

Bishop McConnell thinks, as we have seen, that this is a problem for the metaphysician or, in other words, for the philosopher to solve. But that the philosophers should ever agree in offering a solution of this problem is out of the question. Granted, for the sake of the argument, that they did, it is needful to remember that what they might have to offer us, would be merely their opinion which from the nature of the case would be incapable of proof. We should not lose sight of the fact that succeeding philosophers would differ from them and that their opinion would not give us an adequate foundation for our Christian faith. And is it not generally realized that philosophy does not even pretend to furnish us such a foundation?

The more practical question, however, is, What are we to do so long as philosophers are engaged in the attempt to reach a decision and to make the distinction that is supposed to enable us to hold the doctrine of divine immanence as well as the doctrines of the Christian faith? If we depended on the philosophers, we should at the present time be necessarily at sea in this all-important question. We should unquestionably be gliding and slipping down the awful decline called divine immanence. True, we may accept some solution of our own invention just because it may suit our fancy. But this would not be worthy of intelligent persons. Clearly to settle such questions would be to assume the role of a pope. To accept either metaphysics or popery as the ground for a religious faith would be to build on a foundation of sand.

The doctrine of divine immanence, as held by the representatives of the more radical religious liberalism, is merely a form of religious naturalism. It leaves no room for a theology. "As God is in all there is," says

President McGiffert again, "to explain religion biologically or psychologically [i. e. naturally] does not make it any less divine."[19] But to explain religion naturally is not theology but religious philosophy. "Professor Kirsopp Lake is quite right: If there is no divine revelation, but only natural religion, there can be not only no systematic theology but no theology at all."[20] Considered from this viewpoint there can, in other words, be no Christianity, unless Christianity be defined as natural religion.

Religious naturalism destroys and obliterates all differences between theology and religious philosophy; it means, in a word, the suicide of theology. That the representatives of the new theology persistently refuse to recognize this is a remarkable fact. Despite their attempted natural explanation of all religion, they undertake to maintain — to keep alive by artificial means — some sort of theology. Some of the modernists have freely admitted that a church cannot live without a theology. But the theology which they make so desperate efforts to maintain is, by their own confession, a secondary matter and is built on utterly inadequate ground. If the church needs a theology, will a mere make-believe, sailing under a theological flag, suffice? It is well to remember that many of those who accept the modern religious views see no need for a church. People who do their own thinking and refuse to be led blindly must eventually realize that a church which needs a theology of such nature, to give it an excuse for existence, can not be taken seriously.

The more advanced type of modern liberalism, though

---

[19] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1916, p. 323.

[20] Strong, *Tour of the Missions. Observations and Conclusions*, p. 189.

as a rule it does not openly deny the existence of God, is practically atheistic. Its God is, as has been shown, a force from which all potencies are supposed to have come, a mere energy which has neither volition nor freedom and is not the master but the servant of nature. Religiously considered belief in such a god is of no value. It is a source of weakness rather than of strength. Idolatry is always a curse, even if the idol be the force inherent in matter. And it does not remedy the matter in the least when liberalists say that you are free to believe in any God you like and to hold that God is transcendent, if you desire. This is making the existence of God a matter of mere opinion and of secondary importance. It is assigning a secondary place to God. It means, in the last analysis, that He exists only as an idea in the minds of people.

Sometimes religious liberalists identify God with humanity, as has been pointed out. "I worship God through Man," says Professor William A. McKeever, of the University of Kansas. "To know God is first to know Man and to know Man is to worship the divinity in him.—Man is my best expression of Deity, and so I bow reverently at this shrine."[21] But, as Professor Roy Wood Sellars, of the University of Michigan, observes, "humanity is not an object to be worshipped;" hence, this liberalistic writer concludes, "*the very attitude and implications of worship must be relinquished.*"[22] Professor Gerald Birney Smith says: "The worship of God in a democracy will consist in reverence for those human values which democracy makes supreme."[23] So modern liberalism of-

---

[21] *Man and the New Democracy,* p. 94.

[22] *The Next Step in Religion,* p. 7. Italics mine.

[23] *The Biblical World,* November, 1919, p. 634.

fers the alternative of either relinquishing all worship, or of worshiping a god of human creation.

A number of modern writers have defended the opinion that atheism is on the decline and that there are few men in our time who deny the existence of God. It is true that it has become the fashion for the most radical unbelievers to profess belief in God. Even rank materialists like the late Professor Ernst Haeckel of Jena, lay claim to faith in God. Some of Haeckel's followers have organized themselves as a society claiming to be of religious nature. Not only do they profess faith in God but they, in their own opinion, exalt God to the highest eminence, since they assert that God is everything—the only substance, the only force in existence. We shall here quote a few more of the definitions of God given by modern religious liberals.

A Unitarian minister of the city of Minneapolis, after expressing the view that the orthodox church has failed, writes:

> How different it might be with the world today, had religion based itself upon the strength and worth of man. — How different the world might be today, if religion, instead of teaching man to depend upon some supernatural power for wisdom and to recognize this power as the source of all his blessings, had boldly declared that all he had was the result of his own effort. This virile and human religion needs today to be declared—the religion that looks for no help or consolation from without, but finds it in the indomitable spirit of Good, of God, in man himself—man the doer, the helper, the strengthener, the comforter; the religion which transfers men's efforts from seeking help from heaven whence no help comes to a firm and confident reliance upon themselves in whom lies the possibility of all things.[24]

Professor Gerald Birney Smith speaks of God as

---

[24] *The Christian Register,* March 13, 1919.

"the spiritual forces of the world in which we live,"[25] "the unseen forces of the universe."[26] According to the late Professor Royce, God is the immanent "spirit of the community."[27] The British liberal theologian R. J. Campbell says: "God is my deeper self and yours too; he is the self of the universe."[28] A writer in a British theological magazine thinks God is to be conceived as "the Common Will of all living creatures."[29] John Herman Randall holds that substance, reality, spirit, God, self are synonymous.[30] President G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University, defends the view that "God is the truth, virtue beauty of man" and the real atheist is only he "who denies these attributes to man."[31] "Do you ask me whether God is simply the spirit of humanity? I reply that God is essentially and simply just that," says Frank Carleton Doan.[32] "God and the world are not distinct in kind," thinks Professor Simon N. Patten.[33] A noted writer in a British magazine points out that the church of today "is developing *a worship of humanity*."[34] "Our city has a personality," says Professor Edward Scribner Ames; "each state has an individuality, and every nation is personified through a definite face and figure. Is it

---

[25] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 537.

[26] The same, p. 511.

[27] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1913, p. 638.

[28] The same, 1910, p. 254.

[29] *The Hibbert Journal,* October, 1914, p. 155 ff.

[30] *Humanity at the Cross Roads,* 1915, pp. 174, 184.

[31] *Jesus, the Christ, in the Light of Psychology,* vol. I, p. 285.

[32] In his book, *Religion and the Modern Mind;* quoted *The Princeton Theological Review,* 1910, p. 168.

[33] *The Social Basis of Religion,* p. 81.

[34] *The Biblical World,* May, 1917, p. 300.

not just as natural to sum up the meaning of the whole of life in the person and image of God?"[35]

All this means, as Professor Roy Wood Sellars, of the University of Michigan, has pointed out, that mankind, insofar as it has been religiously liberalized, "is outgrowing theism [i. e. the belief in God] in a gentle and steady way until it ceases to have any clear meaning." With the fading of this belief, this writer says, "man will be forced to acknowledge that he is an earth-child whose drama has meaning only upon earth's bosom."[36] To those who entertain such views "God becomes a mere figure of speech," to quote Professor George R. Dodson, of Washington University. It has become fashionable in our time, says this author, "*to disguise a practical atheism under theistic phrases.*"[37] And we are seriously told by leading representatives of religious liberalism, that the question of atheism is an entirely secondary matter. Since all doctrine is considered non-vital, the doctrine of God must share the common fate. "Liberalism is building a religion that would not be shaken even if the very thought of God were to pass away," says the Unitarian theologian Curtis W. Reese.[38]

It is seen, then, that we have fallen upon days when the confession of belief in God often has no real meaning, or it may have a meaning that is altogether unacceptable.

To know whether the profession of belief in God is more than empty words, it is necessary to ask for definitions. Often it is the case that persons of liberal trend

---

[35] *The New Orthodoxy,* p. 50.

[36] *The Next Step in Religion,* p. 217.

[37] *The Christian Register,* October 2, 1919, p. 15.

[38] *Unity,* August 12, 1920, p. 329.

object to the request for a definition. They, in many instances, refuse to let you know what they are talking about. They take the position that one view of God is about as good as another and it matters little what conception of God is accepted. A certain writer, in answer to this opinion, says poignantly: "When we say, 'Oh, yes, we both believe in God, to me He is Life Force; to you Jehovah,' we know in our hearts that we are simply conniving at the draining of all definite meaning from the word, in order to confuse the issue and keep the peace."[39] If one comes to believe that there is an inherent force in matter as we find it, and that this immanent life-force is the source of all potencies, then there is no God, and there is no use concerning one's self about Him. Professor George R. Dodson has well said, a minister or professor who holds, as some do today, that God is a concept of the mind, and nothing more, "should state his position without camouflage. He should say to the laymen: 'You are wrong in your faith. God is nothing objective. He is merely an idea in the mind. He does not exist, although for pragmatic [practical] purposes it is well for you to act as if He did."[40]

Again this writer says:

> Now it is open to any man to use language as he pleases; he may keep the name of religion for human strivings when he has ceased to believe in God; he may even use the name of God when he means nothing more than a blind, groping cosmic energy or a concept of the mind. But if his sincere purpose be to promote clearness of thought and mutual understanding, it would seem to be better to frankly avow atheism than to dress it in religious garb. If there really is no God . . . if we are being pushed up and on by some blind, groping, cosmic force . . . by all means let us know it

[39] *The Unpopular Review*, July-September, 1918, p. 97.
[40] *The Christian Register*, June 17, 1920, p. 15.

and endure it as well as we can. The last thing we desire is to be deceived.

Is it not an appalling fact that the more radical religious liberalism politely bows God out of existence? For institutions, sailing under a theological or churchly flag, to spread practical atheism may be regarded as unobjectionable from the modern liberalistic viewpoint. Considered from the Biblical point of view it is decidedly immoral in character, as will be further shown elsewhere. Practical atheism in the seminaries means not only disaster to the church, but to society and the state as well.

VIII

THE BIBLICAL VERSUS THE MODERN VIEW OF PRAYER

Between the Bible doctrine of prayer and the modern conception of it there is a vital difference. The Scriptures teach that God, the Creator and Ruler of the world, hears and answers prayer. Besides God's answer to particular petitions, the greatest benefit is derived from prayer-fellowship with God. Prayer is laying hold of the fountain of strength that is in Him. True prayer not only moves God but it moves man through divine power. Prayer, particularly the secret prayer, is, besides the use of God's Word, the greatest of the means of grace.

Prayer may consist, then, of petition or praise, or it may be the still secret prayer of the heart. True prayer is a child-like thing and yet it must be learned in the school of the Holy Spirit. It is communion with God on the ground of the Atonement of Christ. The principal elements of the higher type of prayer are self-surrender, the desire that the self-life cease and God have His way. True prayer is a pestilence to doubt regarding God's Word and to spiritual uncertainty. The truly prayerful heart is in a state of blessed experience of the spiritual realities.

Modernism, on the other hand, denies the manifestation of supernatural divine power in prayer. It denies that God

is moved by prayer; in fact it denies that there is a God who answers prayer. When modernists tell us that prayer moves man, they do not mean that man is moved by divine power, but by power which he himself possesses and which he exercises in prayer. "The mental state of peace, exultation, and resolution which issue upon the exercise of prayer are due to the release of conscious tension,"[1] says Professor Theodore Gerald Soares of the University of Chicago. Man's hope and courage, they say, are hightened by his expectation of help through prayer, therefore he is benefited by it. The modernist prays not with the expectation of being heard but in order that his hope and courage may be increased through the exercise of prayer.

Modernists have given some curious definitions of prayer. According to President G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University, prayer is communion "with the deeper racial self within us."[2] Another theological writer thinks, prayer is "the conversation of the lower with the higher self."[3] George Burman Foster says: "The only prayer which we have a moral right to pray is precisely the prayer which after all we ourselves must answer." The purpose of prayer, this author thinks, is "to fill us with hope and confidence and courage, so that we do in our own strength what men so often idly entrusted to the gifts or to the activities of some god-spirit apart from life."[4]

The question is here again pertinent. Is there no other way by which modernists may obtain hope and confidence than by praying, when they admit that there will be no

---

[1] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 672.

[2] *Jesus, the Christ, in the Light of Psychology,* vol. II, p. 504.

[3] *The Biblical World,* June, 1917, p. 385.

[4] *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence,* p. 184.

answer to prayer except such as emanates from themselves? Is such prayer not a strange and unreasonable attempt to this end? It is indeed, and is so recognized by an increasing number of modernists. Professor Edward Caldwell Moore, of Harvard, is right when he says, liberalists "have minimized the function of worship."[5] Says a Unitarian preacher:

> I thought we Unitarians had reached the conclusion that things are done in this world by human effort and not by divine intervention.....Once we transfer men's efforts from seeking help from heaven, whence no help comes, to a firm and confident reliance upon ourselves, success is assured.[6]

Professor Edward Scribner Ames, in his radically liberalistic book, *The New Orthodoxy,* points out that the divine is now believed to be within the human. The immanence of God renders the old view of prayer and worship inconsistent. "For the modern man *standing erect in his pride of power,* the old ceremonial full of passivity and surrender is the symbol of a dying age."[7] Considered from the viewpoint of modern liberalism Professor Ames is right. If God is not a personal Being, but an immanent force, and if man "in his pride of power" needs no God, then he ought to cease to worship. Prayer and worship are inconsistent from this viewpoint.

It has been shown elsewhere that the Ethical Culture Societies have discarded prayer while liberalistic churches have retained it in their public meetings. These churches would lose the last vestige of an excuse for maintaining the name of a church if they discarded prayer entirely. Both the atheistic Unitarian preacher referred to in a preceding paragraph, and Professor George Burman Foster followed

---

[5] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1912, p. 8.

[6] *The Christian Register,* June 13, 1918, p. 5.

[7] *The New Orthodoxy,* p. 117f. Italics mine.

the custom of offering prayer, when they conducted religious meetings. Their excuse is that belief in God is not essential to prayer. It must be admitted that it is the natural thing for man to worship something. If he refuse to worship God he will find himself worshiping the creature. Idol worshipers may get some satisfaction from their worship. Need it be said that this cannot be compared with true Christian worship—that there is a world of difference between prayer that is practically atheistic (questioning the existence of a God who answers prayer) and the true worship of God?

Religious liberalists say, then, as a rule, that they derive benefit from prayer and are therefore justified in offering prayer. But the question remains, can there be an acceptable excuse for addressing their prayer to God when they deny that there is a God who answers prayer? Obviously the representatives of liberalism have not found it possible to formulate prayers to be addressed to the object of their worship, hence they address their prayers to God. If they addressed them to the powers from whence they expect benefit through prayer, the unreasonableness of liberalistic prayer would readily be recognized. In fact, it is strange indeed that the liberal theologians expect us to accept the modern view of prayer and yet keep on praying. It is as if a physician would disclose to his patient the great value and the true nature of bread pills. While it is true that for certain nervous disorders bread pills may prove beneficial to those who take them for medicine, no normal person would continue to use bread pills after he has learned what they are made of. Unless there is an Objective Reality to which prayer is addressed — a God who hears and answers prayer — it will be the unthinking that may be found praying.

When it is recalled that "the foundation truth of the

new theology is the fundamental unity of God and man," as an eminent new theology writer says, and that the modern immanent God is identified with man, it is clearly seen, that considered from this viewpoint, George Burman Foster is right when he says, no prayers are answered except by man. In the last analysis liberalistic worship is the worship of man, or of humanity, under the guise of the worship of God. "The non-human world is unworthy of our worship," says Bertrand Russell,[8] indicating that he with many others has made humanity his god. But is man worthy of worship? Is it reasonable that he place himself on the pedestal, "standing erect in the pride of his power," and worshiping himself? Is not man, in fact, the most needy creature? Is not man's self-worship a striking proof of his deep fall and of his blindness in things spiritual? What excuse is there in our enlightened land for the idolatrous worship of humanity? — How exceedingly small is man when he consents to become the object of worship.

Deny the existence of a personal, almighty God and there can be only idolatrous worship, degrading in its effects and unworthy of intelligent people.

---

[8] *The Hibbert Journal,* October, 1913, p. 53.

IX

THE DEITY OF CHRIST VERSUS THE MODERN DOCTRINE OF THE DIVINITY OF MAN

The modern doctrine of the immanence of God has no place for the supernatural. It denies that there ever was a miracle. You would suppose, therefore, that the divinity of Christ is also denied. According to liberalistic authors this is a wrong guess, however. We are told that Christ is divine, since all men and everything that exists are divine. "Divine and human are recognized as truly one," says President McGiffert, of Union Theological Seminary, "Christ therefore, if human must be divine, as all men are."[1] Another writer says: "Divine immanence means that we look for Christ's divinity in His humanity, not outside it."[2] Accordingly Christ was divine because He was human. Humanity is considered divine, since it is included in nature and, according to the doctrine of divine immanence, God and nature are essentially one. Therefore Christ, as well as every creature in the universe, is supposed to be divine. "Christ is essentially no more divine than we are or than nature is," says Dr. McGiffert.[3] The question is here pertinent, do the rep-

---

[1] McGiffert, *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas,* p. 207

[2] *The Hibbert Journal,* October, 1914, p. 739.

[3] *The Rise of Modern Religious Ideas,* p. 208.

resentatives of the new theology not see that they in this way, deprive the thought of Christ's divinity of all meaning? Are they not aware of the absurdity of teaching His divinity in the sense that He is divine because He is supposed to be the product of the universal world energy? The meanest creature in the universe is, considered from this viewpoint, divine in the same sense. If this be the true view of the matter, why speak of the divinity of Christ at all?

Strange as it may appear, the theologians who reject the deity of Christ nevertheless teach the incarnation of God (in Christ), that is to say, His becoming a man. They do not accept the Scriptural doctrine of the incarnation but advance a new dogma born of their own fancy. According to William Newton Clarke and other liberalistic theologians who hold the dogma of divine immanence, the divine and human nature are, as has been pointed out, essentially alike; there is no real difference. It follows that every man, being of divine nature, is an incarnation of God, some men in greater, others in less degree, and there is no other incarnation save that which takes place in every member of the human family. "The incarnation of God in Christ is nothing else than the incarnation of God in all men carried to a superlative degree."[4] It simply is the presence of God in humanity.

Furthermore the incarnation of God means, in liberalistic teaching, the evolution of humanity. "God is continually incarnating himself in human life;" "all human history represents the incarnation or manifestation of the eternal Son or Christ of God," says the liberalistic British

---

[4] Clark, Henry W., *Liberal Orthodoxy*, 1914, p. 285. This is not the view of Dr. Clark (a British theologian) however.

theologian R. J. Campbell.[5] Christ's incarnation is considered an anticipation of what humanity, in the course of the evolutionary process, will become in the future. Hence there is nothing miraculous about the incarnation of Christ. Man is God-like, says Dr. Daniel Webster Kurtz, of McPherson College, this "makes the incarnation the most simple and natural thing in religion."[6] The more radical modern theologians say, since God's incarnation in Christ does not essentially differ from His incarnation in all men, it follows that it was not voluntary, and therefore not for redemption. It was the result of natural causes and took place because natural law works of necessity. It did not have its occasion in sin. Christ was the product of the world, not a Savior come from outside the world. In other words, the incarnation in the modern sense is, as concerns Christ and all other men, a necessary occurrence in the evolutionary process.

In short, under various ventures of camouflage a quite new picture of Christ is offered us by modern liberalism. The new theology has bent its energies upon discrediting the doctrine of the deity of Christ. The radical higher criticism, indeed, has this very purpose, namely to disprove and discredit His deity. This, at least is the opinion of the liberalistic theologian K. C. Anderson, of Dundee, Scotland who says: "Not designedly, indeed, but really though unconsciously, the purpose of the criticism of the New Testament, especially in Germany, has been to undermine the doctrine of the divinity of its central figure and to discover a human Jesus."[7] "The bond of union among us all," said a Unitarian professor referring to liberalistic,

---

[5] *The New Theology,* p. 106.

[6] *An Outline of the Fundamental Doctrines of Faith,* p. 26.

[7] *The Monist,* 1915, p. 54.

creedless churches, "is the fight against the deity of Jesus Christ."

The Bible teaches the deity of Jesus Christ. He was the God-man, very God and very man. The divine and the human nature were united in Him. The virgin birth of our Lord is one of the fundamental facts of Christianity. His pre-existence—i. e. His existence before His first coming into the world—follows as a matter of course and is clearly taught in Scripture. With the rejection of the Bible as God's Word, liberalism has consequently also rejected the deity of Christ. "The Bible having been lost," says Professor Benjamin B. Warfield, of Princeton Theological Seminary, "the Christ of the Bible has naturally been lost also."[8] The Christ of the Bible is not acceptable to the modern theologians; and they admit that their merely human Christ is not the one portrayed in Scripture. At the same time they cannot deny that the Bible is the only source of our knowledge of Christ. So radical a critic as George Burman Foster says: "If Jesus did not say these things [which are reported in Scripture] we do not know what he did say."[9] Dr. R. F. Tennant, a British theologian, says on this point:

> If the historical value of the Gospels be seriously questionable [as the modern critics assert], if the portraiture of Christ therein contained be untrustworthy, and the traditional interpretation of His person be gravely in error, then the fundamental convictions of Christians are threatened, and dogmas so essential as that of the Incarnation, not to speak of the dependent doctrines of the Trinity, the Atonement, etc., and also the "sure and certain hope of a resurrection" become insecure. — Personal religion, and not merely a theological tenet, is at stake with such men and wo-

---

[8] *The Princeton Theological Review*, 1910, p. 174.

[9] *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence*, p. 222.

men as take that interest in theological matters which becomes the intelligent Christian.[10]

It is important to remember that the modern liberal critics not only reject the Bible as a supernatural revelation of God, but they disown all that is supernatural. They deny the history of Jesus in so far as it partakes of the supernatural; they deny His supernatural birth, His miracles and His resurrection. They accept only a human Jesus and consider everything beyond that as mythical and unreliable. They have undertaken the task of separating the natural and supernatural in the Gospel account of Jesus. But they have found it impossible to draw the line between that which from their own point of view is acceptable and that which is not acceptable. In Jesus' life and teaching the supernatural is intertwined with the natural in a way that it is impossible to construct a purely human Jesus from the Scriptural account. The supernatural is an inseparable part of it. To attempt a separation is to discredit the whole.

If the contents of the Gospels, in so far as they deal with or involve the supernatural, be mere fiction, it would be asking too much of thinking persons to accept the rest as historical. The four Gospels would have to be considered quite untrustworthy. The amazing confidence of the higher critics in their own ability and wisdom is clearly evident from the fact that they believe that they know more about the life and teachings of our Lord than did the writers of the Gospels. Even if we accepted their denial of the inspiration of the Scriptures, we should have to tell them that their position is unreasonable. If the supernatural in the Scriptures were unacceptable and the Gospel accounts contained fiction as well as fact, the critics would

---

[10] *The Constructive Quarterly*, December, 1919, p. 703.

be undertaking the impossible in their attempt to separate the two.

The human Jesus of modern theology, then, is not the Jesus of the New Testament Scriptures, and since the Scriptures are the only source of our knowledge of Jesus, the "modernized" Jesus never had any existence except in the fancy of liberalistic theologians; he is only a fiction of unbelieving speculation. "This merely human Christ," says Professor C. W. Hodge, of Princeton Theological Seminary, "is not the Christ of the only sources of information concerning Jesus which we possess; it is not the Christ of the Christian church; it is not a Christ of whose existence we have any valid evidence whatever. It is an imaginary picture, the product of emotion and fancy and of a naturalistic philosophy of immanence."[11]

An increasing number of modern liberalists realize this to be a fact. "Recent [radical] critics have declared that the Jesus of liberal Protestantism is also a fiction," says Dr. Douglas C. Macintosh.[12] Professor Warfield says:

> Drews [a radical religious liberalist] is perfectly right in insisting that it is this [Biblical] divine-human Jesus or nothing; that there is not a particle of historical justification for the merely human Jesus of the 'Liberal' theology, and that it is a degradation of Christianity and a deadly blow at religion to find in this purely imaginary, merely human Jesus the central point and impelling force of all our religious life.[13]

At first the critics asserted that the Biblical account of Christ's miracles and of His sayings, in so far as they involve the supernatural, is mythical and untrue. What He said about His supernatural person and work and about the coming end of the world, etc., did not suit their fancy,

---

[11] *The Princeton Theological Review*, 1915, p. 129.
[12] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1912, p. 108.
[13] *The Princeton Theological Review*, 1913, p. 299.

hence they rejected it as mere fiction. But some of the critics have, as intimated in a preceding paragraph, been led to see that this position is untenable. They now say that it must be admitted that Jesus said such things and made such claims as the writers of the Gospel report, but being a mere man, these sayings show that he was greatly mistaken. In fact, some of the critics say that he was mentally deranged—he suffered from a mild form of insanity. Such is the blasphemous opinion of De Loosten, Hirsch, and Binet-Sangle who accuse Jesus of mental derangement in one form or other. It must be admitted that a mere man speaking as Jesus did, would have to be adjudged either a deceiver or mentally unsound. If He was not the One that He said He was, His enemies would have been right when they said: "We have a law and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God" (John 19:7). Professor Albert Parker Fitch, who does not accept Christ's deity, writes: "Jesus said: Read me into God. So far as men can know and understand God, what I am he is like."[14] But unless Jesus was what He claimed to be, such language would be quite unacceptable and offensive. It would be an evidence of mental derangement or serious moral failing.

More and more the representatives of the new theology accept the view that it is enough to consider Jesus a mere ideal and that it is unessential whether He ever lived, or whether the person of Jesus is a myth. Professor Ezra Albert Cook, of the Congregational College of Canada, Montreal, is one of the numerous writers who defend this opinion.[15] We are asked to believe that if Jesus of Nazareth never lived—that is to say, if the whole Gospel story

---

[14] *Can the Church Survive in the Changing Order?* p. 66.

[15] In his *Christian Faith for Men of Today.*

were either fable, or fraud, or both—we could nevertheless adhere to the Christian faith without serious loss.

The more moderate critics, accepting from the Gospel account that which fits into their theological scheme, make Jesus a religious genius or a religious hero. He was not essentially different from other men, they say, but his religious nature was better developed. In other words, he represented perfection of manhood. "Jesus attained in his character all that God ever intended or expected of his Son, Man," says Daniel Webster Kurtz, and "perfect manhood is divine Sonship."[16] In other words, the divinity of Jesus is merely true humanity. This is the view of the majority of representatives of the new theology. It is nothing more than an excuse for the Biblical doctrine of Christ's deity, and a poor excuse, at that; it is a mere husk that has been deprived of its kernel.

This view involves also a denial of Jesus' sinlessness. If He was only humanly perfect and attained to this human perfection through development as a religious genius, He was not without sin. This is freely admitted by some of the modern theologians. A liberalistic writer says:

> Tempted at all points, as we are, and not without sin would be the logical result from the doctrine of the complete humanity of Jesus. From this conclusion the unitarian does not shrink. He is ready to admit with the utmost frankness that in all probability Jesus had his moments of opposition to the divine will which constitutes the attitude of sin.[17]

Professor Rudolf Eucken says rightfully concerning the new theology view of Jesus:

> If Jesus therefore is not God, if Christ is not the second person in the Trinity, then he is man; not a man like any average man among ourselves, but still a man. We can therefore honor him as

---

[16] *An Outline of the Fundamental Doctrines of Faith*, p. 27.

[17] Emerton, *Unitarian Thought*, p. 165.

a leader, a hero, a martyr, but we cannot directly bind ourselves to him nor root ourselves in him; we cannot submit to him unconditionally. Still less can we make him the center of a cult. To do so from our point of view would be nothing else than an intolerable deification of a human being.[18]

Dr. K. C. Anderson says:

But the Christ of the church is not such a Jesus [as the critics would have us believe]. The important question is whether the Christian church can make the great change of belief which the acceptance of such a Jesus would involve and remain the Christian church. If the critic's evidence for his thesis is so overwhelming that it must be accepted—well, then it must; but it is important that the churches of Christendom should realize the kind of Jesus the critics are presenting them with, and the vast revolution in belief which it involves.

Christianity from the beginning has been conceived as a redemptive scheme, the good news of a divine being coming down from heaven to rescue fallen man, the Christ or Savior not being a member of the fallen race, but apart from it and superior to it. To make the Christ or Savior a member of the race, no matter how specially endowed with moral and spiritual qualities, is to alter the whole conception and to tear out the heart of the evangelic story. The Christian church has never yet consented to put its Christ into the same category as the prophets of the Old Testament or the philosophers of Greece, but this is just what will have to be done if the Jesus of the critics is to be accepted as the Christ.

The triumph of liberalism is really a defeat, for it means the destruction of Christianity as Christianity has been known in all ages of its history. — If Jesus was a man as Socrates, Alexander, Isaiah, and Jeremiah were men, then the whole Christian world has been under a delusion. The discovery that Jesus was a man merely as those named were men, would be regarded as destructive to Christianity just as would be the discovery that Jesus never lived at all. It would be the destruction of Christianity as Christianity has been understood by the great saints and theologians of the past.[19]

---

[18] Quoted, *The Princeton Theological Review,* 1913, p. 339.

[19] *The Monist,* 1915, pp. 55-57.

X

SIN AND SALVATION

The Scriptures teach that sin involves guilt; it is in the last analysis "enmity against God." The natural state of man is one of total depravity. This does not mean that the sinner is as bad as he can be. It means that the corrupting character and guilt of sin are such that no mere reformation or improvement, no development of that which man may naturally possess can save him. Salvation requires a supernatural regeneration on the ground of the atonement of Christ. God Himself had no other way of salvation for sinful man than through the sacrifice of Calvary — His own self-sacrifice in His Son.

Corresponding to the guilt of sin is the wrath of God against sin. Clearly as the Scriptures teach that God is love, just so clearly they teach also His holiness and righteousness. The wrath of God is the necessary consequence of His holiness and of the guilt of human sin. God loves the sinner but cannot save him except through the atonement of Christ. If the sinner spurns the offer of salvation "the wrath of God remaineth on him." The objections of modern liberalism to the thought of God's wrath are due to the denial of the truth of the Gospel: that Christ who is very God gave His life and died, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

Liberal modern theology leaves no room for a real conception of sin. The doctrines of divine immanence and of universal divine Fatherhood take the seriousness out of the thought of sin. The more advanced liberalistic theogians consider sin a necessary incident of evolution, a mere stage in the development of humanity, the growing pains of the soul, etc. A clergyman writing in *The Hibbert Journal* confesses frankly that sin is meaningless to him. Dean Fenn, of the Divinity School, Harvard University, says, in an article on *Modern Liberalism:* "And what of human sin? *Here more than anywhere else the weakness of modern liberalism shows itself.* It may be conceded that traditional [conservative, orthodox] theology made too much of sin, but surely that was better than to make light of it."[1] R. J. Campbell, the author of *The New Theology,* said in a sermon, the lowest vices and most hideous crimes are a blind and mistaken searching after the divine in us. A certain secular writer has well said:

> Certain of our wise men of today have shaded away sin till it becomes an expression of temperament. They tell us that we sin because our grandfather sinned and because our home is situated in the wrong block. These are clever words of clever comforters, and surely they ought to wipe away forever the tears from our eyes. But they do not speak to human need. They leave the sinning one to continue in all despair. He does not ask that his sin shall be explained away. He wishes forgiveness and a fresh start. In the Book, which is not read as once it was, there are no soft words about sin. But the way out is shown.

Albrecht Ritschl and many others of the more moderate representatives of the new theology teach that the atonement of Christ affected man alone and did not change God's attitude to sinful man. The one and only purpose of Christ's life and death, they say, was to show God's love.

---

[1] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1913, p. 516. Italics mine.

To accept the Atonement means, according to this view, simply to believe that God is love. If man could have believed in the love of God without Christ's death on Calvary, no Atonement would, according to the new theology, have been necessary. His death, they tell us, is not important in itself but must be viewed as a part of His life, and His life has value for us only as an example. "Theology has made a fundamental mistake," says Walter Rauschenbusch, "in treating the atonement as something distinct" and not "as an integral part of his life." And again: "His death is a matter almost negligible in the work of salvation."[2] Christ's death was, according to the modern religious views, simply a testimony and seal for His teaching. It was nothing more than the death of a martyr. His life, His teaching and His death were merely a revelation and exhibition of God's love. "Christ was not a Sin Offering to propitiate God" says Daniel Webster Kurtz, "His part in salvation was to reveal God's love and forgiveness and grace." — "His death was the climax of his revealing work of God's love."[3] This is the so-called moral influence theory of the Atonement.

Modern theology makes much of the fatherhood of God. For God's fatherhood in the Scriptural sense it has substituted a new doctrine which exalts God's love at the expense of His righteousness and holiness. The modern view of God's fatherhood leaves out of consideration the fact that, unless God is truth and holiness as well as love, He cannot be love in any real sense. This new doctrine ignores "the sinfulness of sin." It stands for an indulgent but soft and weak fatherhood of God; too weak to deal appropriately with sin; too sentimental to insist on the sinner taking the

[2] *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 260.

[3] *An Outline of the Fundamental Doctrines of Faith*, p. 30f.

only way of salvation from sin. But all the glib modern talk of God's love, which ignores the Scripture teaching of sin and salvation, is nothing beyond a sickly sentimentalism which has never saved a soul nor ever will. This modern supposed love of God is indeed not the love of an intelligent moral being.

The moral influence theory of the Atonement makes Christ a Savior by teaching, not a Redeemer by atonement. The new theology conceives of Christ as a Savior in an unreal sense. It does not teach salvation by Christ's work of redemption and of regenerating the heart, but by following His example. Considered from this viewpoint salvation is not the work of Christ but our own work. And since it is supposed that Christ is not the Savior in any real sense, it is an entirely secondary matter who He was. This has been taught by many representatives of the new theology. Professor George Cross, of Rochester Theological Seminary, for example, says, the theology which he represents is to develop a new doctrine of salvation in which "questions of Christ's pre-existence and post-existence will be laid aside as unpractical and unprofitable."[4]

A pertinent example of the treatment of the doctrine of the Atonement in modern theology is offered by Walter Rauschenbusch, in his book *A Theology for the Social Gospel*. This author devotes about forty pages to the subject of the Atonement. He addresses himself to the task to show that Jesus died for the sins of the world, not however in the Scriptural sense but rather in the sense that every one who suffered innocently and died a martyr, suffered and died for the sins of the world. But, if this be the right view, the question is in order, why is it that this

---

[4] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1915, p. 43.

author gives so much space to the subject of the Atonement? What is there in his view of the Atonement that would justify his extensive treatment of this question? Why should theology concern itself particularly with the Atonement and the death of Christ, if He merely died the death of a martyr? This is precisely the point that Rauschenbusch fails to clear up. The unreality and artificial character of this modern teaching on the Atonement is clearly apparent from Rauschenbusch's treatise. Having labored to show that Jesus died for the sins of the world he says, the death of Jesus is "a matter almost negligible in the work of salvation." And again he says: "What the death of Jesus now does for us, the death of the prophets did for him."[5] After all is said, the fact remains that the denial of the Atonement, as taught in Scripture, not only takes the heart out of the Gospel message but it utterly distorts the picture of Jesus. Deny that His agony and His feeling of being forsaken of God were the result of His sin-bearing, and you are forced to admit that Socrates who innocently suffered death calmly and without agony, was greater as a martyr.

Hand in hand, with the rejection of the thought of Christ as the Redeemer goes the modern doctrine of salvation by character. This doctrine means that a good moral character, such as respectable people are supposed to have, is sufficient for salvation. It is a doctrine for those who feel that their own righteousness fills all requirements. Religious liberalism has no message for the sinner, be he respectable or not, who realizes that he is lost. The Gospel message, on the other hand, is for him who is "down and out" as well as for the one of respectable character, pro-

[5] *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 262.

vided that they realize their need of salvation. The offer is to all. The vilest of sinners may come and accept it by believing that Christ, his substitute, died for him and shed His blood for his sin. The guilt and stain of sin is cancelled and the new nature implanted in him.

Salvation from sin is a free gift of grace. It is sometimes said that faith is a condition which the sinner must fulfill in order to be saved. In fact, however, justifying faith is but the acceptance of that which God is offering without money and without price. Repentance of sin is necessarily included in seeking salvation. Unless the whole attitude of the seeking sinner is one of repentance, his desire to be saved is unreal. The sinner may come as he is and claim Christ as his personal Savior from sin and from hell. As a rule the greatest hindrance to the personal saving work of Christ on the part of the repentant sinner is the subtle unbelief which would assist Him somehow in this work. Many a soul persists in the attempt to become worthy of salvation by self-effort. But it is only as the sinner realizes that his own effort accomplishes less than nothing, that it is only a hindrance to the real work; it is when he is willing to accept the work of salvation which Christ has finished on the cross—it is then that salvation for him becomes a fact.

Singular it is that the new theology overlooks the patent fact that the moral influence theory of the Atonement is contradictory in itself. Unless a real atonement, as the Scriptures teach, was necessary, the question is in order, Why should God permit the best and holiest One of all men to die an ignominious death on the cross? How could this be considered an exhibition of God's love? Even if Christ's deity be recognized, His death on the cross was uncalled-for as a mere proof of God's love. If He died for sinners

merely in the sense that sinners put Him to death and to give an example of martyrdom, Professor Rauschenbusch would indeed be right when he says, "his death is a matter almost negligible in the work of salvation." In that case it would be impossible to believe that God had no better way to show His love than by permitting the tragedy of Calvary. In other words, unless Christ's death had a great purpose, besides showing God's love, it was not even an exhibition of His love. It is clear then, that the moral influence theory is an unacceptable substitute for the Scriptural doctrine of the Atonement. The modern theory is, in fact, a denial of it; it is a counterfeit of the Biblical doctrine. As a matter of fact the Bible doctrine of the Atonement is a stumbling block to the self-sufficient, self-righteous carnal modern mind. It is unpopular among those who would tune their faith to the spirit of the time. This is a poor excuse, however, for inventing a doctrine which denies the Atonement and introducing the new doctrine under the old name. There can be no valid ground for such counterfeiting.

Liberalistic leaders have asserted that the Biblical doctrine of salvation is unacceptable to them because, so they tell us, it concerns itself only with the individual, and not with society and its great needs. We are told that the modern mind will not accept an individualistic gospel and that religion must be socialized. Salvation must be interpreted in terms of social service and social reconstruction. The representatives of religious liberalism ignore the fact that the greatest factor for substantially improving things on earth is the personal inward transformation through the Gospel. This is the great power to produce moral character without which true social improvement is impossible.

There will always be social improvement to the extent that the message of the Gospel is accepted and the precepts of the Gospel are lived.

Furthermore, modernism overlooks the fact that personal salvation also is for the individual a far more important matter than the privilege to live in a socially improved society. It is more important to have the victory of the spirit through a personal relationship to God than to have one's social and political and economic desires satisfied. And the thought that the world may be regenerated through human instrumentality, or in other words, that conditions on earth may be improved to such extent that men are no longer born in sin and do no longer need personal salvation through Jesus Christ — this thought is utterly fallacious. If individual reformation does not change the heart of the one who reforms, neither will improvement of social conditions break the organized power of evil that is manifest in the world. It is quite true that desirable reforms may often be accomplished, but to reconstruct, or regenerate, the world through human instrumentality is impossible. It is not a man's job.

While these facts should not be lost sight of, it is on the other hand, as intimated in a preceding paragraph, just as important to remember that the Christian church, in so far as she fulfills her calling, is the light of the world and the salt of the earth. It is a matter of the utmost importance that the influence of a Christian's life is what God has designed it to be. The fact that the world cannot be regenerated through human effort can by no manner of means be interpreted to mean that the believer has no responsibility as to the temporal and eternal well-being of his fellows. Biblical orthodoxy, unless it be unreal "dead" orthodoxy, manifests itself by a deep sense of responsibility toward

those who need the Christian's service. The Christian's responsibility is as great as his opportunity for service. But to render such service effectively, the principle of separation from worldliness is essential. Worldly religiousness ceases to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth.

A host of new theology writers assure us that the great question that faces us is not personal salvation, but that the church must save herself by adopting a message that is acceptable to the modern mind. We are told that, unless the church succeeds in winning the leaders of modern world-thought, she is doomed. But "why should Christianity undertake to adapt itself to the modern world instead of laboring to adapt the world to itself? Is its task to be conformed to this world, and not rather to transform it? Is modern thought the standard of Christian truth, and not the reverse? Is not the whole undertaking an implicit denial of Christianity as a revelation of truth?"[6] It is in very deed.

Here is manifest the fundamental contrast between the old and the new Christianity. The new Christianity is bound to win the favor of the world and, therefore to accommodate itself to the prevailing world-thought. Its great task is supposed to be to modify and reconstruct its message to make it conformable to the prevailing thought and spirit of the time. Professor H. C. Ackerman, of the Divinity School of the Protestant Episcopal Church at Nashotah, Wis., for example, says:

> The church of God in the world today must explain herself to this generation. The eternal truth must be seen with the eyes of the modern age. And to be seen correctly, or more correctly understood, her doctrines must be translated into the vital terms of the day. And this day is undoubtedly materialistic. Conse-

[6] *The Harvard Theological Review*, 1915, p. 288.

quently *the translation of doctrine must be in materialistic terms.* — Such an applied Christianity must first become scientific in expression. The theologian must learn how to think and express himself in materialistic terms.[7]

Now to express religion, or salvation, in materialistic terms is to materialize it. Professor Ackerman is a representative of radical liberalism and is of the opinion that this is necessary to meet the demands of our age. Under liberalistic leadership our age, in the language of Profess or Roy Wood Sellars, of the University of Michigan, is ascending to *"spiritualized naturalism."*[8] This means that naturalism — which means practical atheism — is "spiritualized;" it is given a religious cloak.

There are other modernized theologians who do not advocate so radical a change; all representatives of the new theology, however, are of the opinion that religious doctrine must adapt itself to our age, for, in their opinion, the church cannot hope to succeed, or even live, except by virtue of such change. In other words, the present question, as already said, is not one of personal or individual salvation, but of salvation for the church. But why should the church be saved, if personal salvation is not needful? Would it not be more honorable for the church to die the death of the righteous than to be turned into a social club or debating society? What right has a society of such character to the name of the Christian church?

The modern idea of saving the church stands in the strongest possible contrast to the Bible teaching on the church and on salvation. Christianity, as represented by Christ and the apostles, and by the believers of all periods, considers it the church's task to overcome the world, instead

---

[7] *The Biblical World,* September, 1918, p. 197. Italics mine.

[8] *The Next Step in Religion,* p. 2.

of accommodating herself to it. The apostle Paul was beheaded, Peter was crucified, head downward, because they refused to make their message acceptable to the great world leaders. Ye noble army of Christian martyrs, look upon the latter day modernized religious professors who for success, as the world counts success, are willing to renounce the doctrine and truth for which you gave your lives. To win the favor of men they take their orders from the world. They believe that the church, in so far as she holds fast to the old faith, is destined to die. Granted for the sake of the argument that they were right on this point, our grievance is that to abandon her message would for the church be nothing less than to commit an act of self-destruction—to die the death of a suicide.

While our Lord, as we have seen, came to overcome the world and cared so little for world-thought that He made fishermen and tentmakers His first apostles, charging them to preach the Gospel to the poor; while He instructed them to rely on supernatural aid in the great work to which they were called, and gave them to believe that through Him they would be victorious and the cause would prosper though they died at the stake — the representatives of modern liberalism do not rely on supernatural help. Success, in their view, means socialization — wholesale world-improvement, and this they believe impossible through the old Christian message; therefore they have abandoned it. Now this secularization of the church's message is not, as they would have us believe, its crown of glory; it is the cause of the impotency and decay of the modernized church — its burning shame. The denial of the Christian message of personal salvation from sin makes the existence of the church superfluous.

XI

TWO TYPES OF THE NEW THEOLOGY COMPARED

The pope claims that he is a religious authority, a higher authority indeed than the Scriptures. The representatives of the new theology, on the other hand, profess to reject all "authority religion;" they do not recognize any authority, or norm, in religious matters, except the individual religious feeling or consciousness. The more advanced new theology men deny even this as a religious authority. Now to build a Christian theology on no other basis than religious feeling is manifestly impossible. The representatives of the new theology reject the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures. In so far as they teach Christian theology they do not have an adequate foundation for it. The fact is they, like the pope, substitute their own authority for that of Scripture. Wittingly or unwittingly they follow in the footsteps of the pope on this point. A few examples may serve to make this clear.

Dr. Lyman Abbott has written a book on *The Other Room,* meaning heaven and the life in the beyond. A reviewer in a liberal theological journal raises the pertinent question whether there is, from Abbott's own point of view, a foundation for the picture of heaven which he gives. Abbott utterly rejects the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures; he gives only his own thoughts on the points in question, partly in agreement with and partly

contrary to Scripture. He believes in heaven but not in hell. He fails to give a single reason why he believes as he does. Doubtless there are those who read his books and accept his theology on no other authority than that of Dr. Lyman Abbott.

Professor William Newton Clarke, one of the leading new theology authors in America, wrote a book in which he records his departure from "the faith once delivered." He points out that in his youth and early manhood he accepted the Scriptures as God's inerrant word. Then he began to doubt the reliability of Scripture. From decade to decade he permitted himself to drift farther and farther from his former position until finally the Bible was for him a book of many errors, no longer an authority in matters of faith. In His *Christian Theology* he asserts that there is no divine inspiration which makes the contents of the Bible authoritative or reliable. The authority of the Scriptures, he says, is found in its truth, not in its supposed inspiration. Since the Bible is believed to be authoritative only in so far as it is supposed to be true, nothing must be accepted on the authority of the Scriptures, or simply because it is written in the Bible. This is the new theology view of Scripture. Whatever may be said of it, it is obviously not the Christian view. In fact, it is the denial of the Christian doctrine of Scripture. It is the view held by unbelievers in general, including pagans. The meaning of the modern liberalistic view of Scripture is that the great truths of Scripture, which cannot be verified except on the ground that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, must be discarded. The propagation of this liberalistic view of Scripture sounds the death knell for these truths. The all-important questions of the whence, wherefore, and whither of human existence must remain unanswered.

Now while Professor Clarke, in consequence of his denial of the authority of Scripture, rejects some of the fundamental Christian doctrines, he inconsistently maintains a few doctrines for which there is no other ground than Scripture authority. Dean Shailer Mathews says rightly that "generally speaking Clarke found the material of his theology in the Bible."[1] His various theological views he attempted to establish on a Scripture foundation. But why should he make such an attempt. if the Scriptures are not authoritative? Was it distasteful to him to proclaim his teachings on his own authority? However that may be, the fact is that he substituted his own authority for that of the Bible. This is obvious from his own statements. He says, for example, "I beg my fellow-Christians not to distrust the Bible or to fear for it, as if certain open questions were to be settled to its destruction or even to its weakening." He says further that *"the question of the religious value of the Bible is not an open question."*[2] Is it possible, it may be asked, that William Newton Clarke wrote these sentences? The Bible is in his opinion neither inspired nor inerrant, and among its errors are not only historical but also religious errors. Nevertheless he asks his readers to accept on his own authority the opinion that the religious value of the Bible — whatever that may mean — is not an open question. When he says, the Bible continues to be of great religious value he does not speak of the whole Bible. He does not mean to say that those religious thoughts of the Bible which he rejects are of value. Clearly what he meant to say is that the value of certain religious ideas of the Bible is not open to question — namely of the religious ideas which appealed to Dr. Clarke as acceptable. In other

---

[1] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1912, p. 446.

[2] *Sixty Years with the Bible,* p. 254.

words, under the guise of defending the religious value of the Bible, he defended the religious value of certain ideas which found favor before his eyes. In short, he clearly rejected the authority of Scripture and built his theology on his own authority.

Pathetic indeed was the theological position of this new theology leader in his later years. Since the time of his early manhood he had been drifting, drifting. In his most prominent work he clearly intimates that he expected to become still more liberal in his views. There is good evidence to show that he never ceased to drift and to tune his views to the changeable spirit of the time. Evidently he realized the thoroughly unstable character of what he retained as Christian theology; he recognized the danger that his readers and students, drawing the logical conclusion from his own premises, would be led to abandon the theological remnant which he labored to defend. He feared, apparently, that they would, on his own premises, come to the conclusion that there is no valid ground for Christian theology and for the existence of the church. Hence William Newton Clarke, who would not have his students accept anything on Scripture authority, asked them to accept his theology on his own authority.

The late George Burman Foster, Professor in the University of Chicago, and in the latter part of his life also the pastor of a Unitarian church, was a well-known advocate of religious liberalism. He is noted, in fact, for his denial of all that is dear to the Christian's heart. He openly denied the fundamentals of Christianity as well as the doctrinal points which the more moderate liberals, such as Professor Clarke, endeavored to retain. Nevertheless he professed to be an adherent of the Christian faith. He was, as already stated, the pastor of a liberalistic church and

a leading representative of the so-called liberal theology. Since he represented the more advanced type of religious liberalism, the question is pertinent, Of what did the religious faith of Professor Foster consist and what were the grounds, or what was the authority on which it was established?

In one of his last publications Professor Foster shows that some students in liberalistic seminaries have decided, against his advice, to abandon the ministry, and have "made shipwreck of faith." This means that they have renounced the church and have joined the ranks of the avowed freethinkers who are open opponents of the Christian church. Now, if the question can be solved wherein these students have changed when they left the ranks of Professor Foster's followers to become pronounced unbelievers, it will then become clear what he means when he speaks of making shipwreck of faith; and consequently we shall be able to answer the question, what was his conception of "faith." Therefore we desire to ascertain the differences between the position held by Foster and his followers on the one hand, and that of avowed freethinkers on the other.

Wherein does Professor Foster's position differ from that of the unbelievers? Perhaps he believed in God whom the freethinkers deny? No, he did not differ from them on point of the existence of God. He says: "God is a symbol to designate the universe in its ideal achieving capacity." Religion, he says further, may adapt itself to the idea that God and the universe are identical or, in other words, that there is no God but the universe.[1] He also agreed with the freethinkers in their opinion of Jesus. He denies His

[1] *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence*, p. 183.

deity and even says: "Of Jesus we know honestly very little, almost nothing, with indubitable certainty."[2]

Or did Professor Foster differ from the freethinkers on point of the immortality of the soul? No, there is no difference in their views on this point. He did not teach immortality but held it as an open question, like the freethinkers. Since he was the pastor of a liberal church and as such was under obligation to lead in public worship, perhaps he differed from the freethinkers on the subject of prayer? Again a negative answer must be given. Professor Foster was of the opinion that we should pray no other prayer than one which we ourselves may answer.[3] No freethinker would find fault with this conception of prayer. Or did he differ from them on point of the church? He occupied an ecclesiastical office while they advocate the thought that there is no need for the church. The difference here is apparent rather than real. Foster taught that Jesus never founded a church and its existence is quite inessential. There is, in short, no appreciable difference in doctrinal points. Professor Foster was a freethinker as far as doctrine is concerned.

What about the subject of ethics? Perhaps Professor Foster defended some lofty moral ideals which the freethinkers do not accept. The published statement of principles of the freethinkers shows that this supposition is unfounded. In fact, Professor Foster's position on certain questions of moral reform was so exceedingly liberal and modern that he offended some of his own followers.

When Professor Foster speaks of theological students as having made shipwreck of faith, he does not mean to find fault with them because they reject any or all of the points

[2] The same, p. 193.

[3] The same, p. 184.

of Christian doctrine. He did not believe that to deny the doctrines of Christianity is to make shipwreck of faith. The said students could in fact not be his followers without accepting the freethinkers' position on these points. Wherein, then, have they in his opinion erred that he speaks of them as having made shipwreck of faith?

It is clear that Professor Foster would not have spoken of those students as having made shipwreck of faith if they had been willing to follow his footsteps and, though they were unbelievers, to accept the office of minister or teacher in the church. And it must not be supposed that the said students who have abandoned the ministry in consequence of taking a course in a liberalistic divinity school, have scruples against teaching their newly adopted religious views. The point to which they object is, to teach these views under the guise of Christianity. In other words, their sin, in Professor Foster's eyes, consists in this that, after becoming freethinkers — or, in plain English, unbelievers — they have concluded that they should not pretend to be Christian ministers. Obviously their conscience does not permit them to accept an office which would put them under obligation to teach the Christian religion — only to teach free thought to which Professor Foster and other teachers of similar views have converted them. We should say, therefore, their difficulty is one of conscience rather than of faith. To be plain, their training at the new theology institution has given them the modern theological views but, evidently, has not given them the modernized elastic conscience, at least not to the extent desired by the liberal teachers.

Professor Foster, as said in a preceding paragraph, stood for the denial of Christian doctrine. He substituted for the Christian faith the new dogma that free thought is

only the most advanced modern interpretation of or substitute for Christianity and, therefore, freethinkers are Christians. However, if freethinkers are not willing to be considered Christians, if they will not be identified with the church, but join themselves to be avowed freethinkers, (as did the said theological students), they have, in Professor Foster's opinion, made shipwreck of faith. To make shipwreck of faith, then, is not to renounce the Christian faith, but it is to deny the Christian character of free thought. This means that, viewed from the liberalistic angle, to make shipwreck of faith is an exceedingly narrow, trifling thing. The religious difference between Professor Foster's position and that of the avowed freethinkers is a mere shibboleth.

This brings us to the second part of our question, What is the ground or authority for the new dogma, making faith and shipwreck of faith so curious propositions? It goes without saying that it is founded neither on Scripture, nor science, nor experience. Its only foundation is the opinion of a freethinking professor who, by advancing this dogma, makes himself a religious authority — a pope. Again we ask, what may be the reason that Professor Foster set up so outlandish a dogma which is unacceptable even to some of his own students whom he has largely influenced? What, in other words, is back of the peculiar type of popery for which he stood? Was it love to Christ that prompted him to demand of unbelievers to name themselves Christians? But he held that we, practically, know nothing with certainty about the work and teaching of Christ. Or was it regard for the Christian church? In his largest theological work he claimed that Christianity is not the final and best religion. He called himself a Christian and also asserted, as we have seen, that, unless freethinkers in general do

likewise, they have made shipwreck of faith. Nevertheless he admitted that, had he lived at some later period, he would not have pretended to be a Christian. According to a statement published by the Unitarian congregation of which he was pastor, he was "devoted to kindling the light of a better religion." It is worthy of notice that the Western Unitarian Conference, in 1886, refused to adopt the name "Christian." Dr. Foster, on the other hand, insisted that unbelievers have a right to the Christian name.

A curious thing is this modern liberalistic faith, as defended by Dr. Foster, is it not? For the Christian message it substitutes a mere shibboleth. It makes the question of being a Christian, or a religious person, hinge on an exceedingly narrow pivot — the unreasonable dogma of a little new theology pope. On point of narrowness it is almost unprecedented in religious history. Lest the reader think there may be some mistake about it, it is repeated here that George Burman Foster was a distinguished professor in a leading university, one of the editors of a well-known theological magazine, a notable representative of the modern religious liberalism. Says a theological professor in the University of Chicago, in a sketch of Foster's life: "It is only through the work of such men as Professor Foster that the Church is enabled to keep step with the progress of the ages. They do not sit in her councils, but they break out the paths of thought along which those councils will later follow."[4]

The serious question arises, how is it to be accounted for that thinking people fail to recognize the unreasonableness, the narrow popery of the modern faith for which this man stood and for which so many others stand, practically,

[4] *The Christian Register,* January 30, 1919, p. 10.

today? How can such a position, as this man defended, be countenanced in a great university? Academic freedom, we are told, gives a professor liberty to teach his views. Does it? How long would a professor teaching Romish popery be tolerated in such an institution? And is not the modern liberalism, as represented by Dr. Foster, even more unreasonable and more narrow than Romish popery? What may be the reason, we must ask, that there are in our day so many who accept modern religious notions of any kind, be they ever so absurd? — that even highly educated people who disown the old Christian faith seem to be helpless as children when brought face to face with a situation requiring religious discernment? — that they so easily fall prey to "strong delusions" and believe the modern faith to be an improvement on the Bible faith? — that professors in prominent theological seminaries are of the opinion that men like George Burman Foster alone can save the church and that she is doomed if she persists in Scriptural orthodoxy? How is it to be explained that such men take a position which any person of ordinary powers of intelligence should recognize as unreasonable? We have no answer to these questions except the one given by Paul, II Cor. 4:4.

A comparison between George Burman Foster and William Newton Clarke shows that the difference in their theology was in degree, not in kind. Foster simply had advanced farther on the road on which Clarke also was traveling. Evidently the difference is, at least in part, due to the fact that Clarke lived nearly a generation earlier than Foster and though he yielded to liberalistic influences, he was at the time when the first wave of modern religious

liberalism struck our land, a man of more advanced years finding it more difficult to adjust himself fully to the new theology viewpoint which he accepted. Another reason for Foster's greater radicalism is that he spent considerable time in the study of liberalistic theology in Europe.

William Newton Clarke, whose work on theology has been more widely read and studied in America than that of any other recent theological writer, is a representative of the new theology, though he was of the more moderate modern school. Not only does he reject the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, but he denies other fundamental Christian teachings. On point of the deity of Christ his teaching in his *Outline of Christian Theology* is unsatisfactory, and in a later work he advanced views on this point which could be subscribed to by any Unitarian. Every reader of his books knows that he disowned other doctrines which, considered from the Scriptural point of view, are of vital importance.

One of the most objectionable parts of Clarke's *Theology,* is the section treating of the work of Christ, the Redemption and Atonement. The essential points are denied. The Bible teaches that sin is so "exceeding sinful" that the sacrifice of Calvary (God's self-sacrifice) was necessary to make a way for sinful man to be saved. Christ, the just and innocent One, made atonement for the sin of the world by His vicarious death. He died for us. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him. He bore our sin. Alone through His blood which He gave for a ransom there is salvation for fallen man. His perfect righteousness is accounted to those who believe in Him. Clarke ignores and denies these vital truths. He stands for the "moral influence theory" of the Atonement. He sets aside the Scripture teaching of Christ satisfying the divine law in

our stead; he denies the doctrine of justification by faith. In short, Clarke denies the evangelical doctrine of the Atonement and of salvation by faith — the very heart of the Gospel message. He gives us a substitute for it which at first glance has the appearance of the genuine thing, but a close examination shows it to be a counterfeit. Indeed the pertinent chapters in his book may be said to be a masterpiece of deception.

The pertinent fact deserves notice that William Newton Clarke accomplished far more for the cause of modern religious liberalism than George Burman Foster. Where Foster has one reader, Clarke has a hundred. While Foster's free thought position cannot possibly be mistaken, there are those who read Clarke and accept his views without recognizing their unscripturalness. Foster slew his thousands, and Clarke his ten thousands. In many theological seminaries Clarke's *Theology* is used as a text book; it was placed in the Course of Study for Preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North). This means that a candidate for the ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church may be ordained only after he has studied this work as the theological text book. It is the only book on systematic theology in the course. How strange that such a book is selected as the text book in theology. Is it possible, we must ask, that the Methodist Episcopal Church, as represented by the pertinent committees, is of the opinion that this book is one of the best works on Christian theology? Professor John Alfred Faulkner, of Drew Theological Seminary, says poignantly (without special reference to the use of Clarke's *Theology*)[5]:

> Our young preachers thus get an emasculated theology that would make our Methodist fathers turn in their graves, though

[5] *On the Value of Church History*, p. 24.

they will get it in so beautiful spirit that they will almost without knowing it substitute modern subjectivism for those verities as old as Christ and Paul which made the Protestant churches and especially which made the Methodist Church.

Clarke was a master of English style. A British reviewer of one of his principal books rightfully intimates that as a rhetorician he was greater than as a theologian.[1] His extraordinary ability as a writer enabled him to give his defence of the new theology a comparatively orthodox appearance or, in other words, to sugar-coat the deadly poison which he disseminated. Despite his denial of the Christian fundamentals, he uses the familiar expressions, and the unwary suppose all to be right. The plea that his book is useful to make young ministers acquainted with modern views can, therefore, not be taken seriously. It goes without saying that theological text books should be thoroughly sound and should expose false doctrine instead of defending it or offering it in a sugar-coated form. The students should know that Clarke's theology is founded on drifting sand and that its author prided himself of drifting with the times. They should be acquainted with the fact that only his death made an end to his theological drifting. Pity the minister who is left under the impression that such a book deserves to be regarded as an exposition of true Christian theology.

[1] *The Hibbert Journal,* vol. VIII, p. 210.

XII

THE ETHICAL INTERPRETATION OF RELIGION — THE NEW MORALITY

Modern liberalism offers an ethical interpretation of Christianity. Religion is either identified with morality and is held to be of value only in so far as it is defined as such; or morality is at least considered of primary importance and religion relegated to a secondary place, the question of faith and creed being kept in the background.

We shall here quote a number of liberalistic writers who testify to the fact that liberalism stands for an ethical interpretation of Christianity. Dr. K. C. Anderson, of Dundee, Scotland, says: "According to Liberalism Christianity is an ethical system of teaching or precept, and Jesus Christ is the supreme teacher and moral and spiritual guide."[1] Again this writer says: "The liberal criticism of the Scriptures has, in effect, reduced Christianity from the religion of redemption to an ethical system."[2] "If the different forms of liberal theology be compared," says the editor of one of the most important British theological journals, "it will be seen that, as orthodoxy is left behind, there is a gradual increase in the spiritual competence assigned to *man*, and a gradual decrease in the part assigned to *the saving power of God*, until we pass into what is almost pure moralism, in

[1] *The Monist*, 1915, p. 45.

[2] The same, p. 66.

which the name of God is little more than the reminiscence of past development."[3] The new gospel, says Walter Rauschenbusch, "plainly concentrates religious interest on the great ethical problems of social life." This writer shows further that the social gospel identifies religion with "ethical righteousness."[4] "It deals with the ethical problems of the present life."[5] Professor Gerald Birney Smith, of the University of Chicago, says:

> The ethical transformation of theology....is actually taking place with great rapidity.[6] — The theology of our day is rapidly developing toward this larger ethical ideal.[7] — Probably this ethical aspect of Christianity is most important in the eyes of most men. Theological opinions are very generally regarded as matters of personal option. But moral convictions are esteemed to be of primary importance.[8]

It is seen, then, that modern religious liberalism is closely related to the Societies for Ethical Culture. The purpose and aim of these societies is to advance the cause of good morals. They set themselves the task "to increase among men the knowledge of love and the practice of right." There is, in fact, no real difference between the message presented by the Ethical Culture Society leaders and that of the more radical liberalistic preachers who adhere to the ethical interpretation of Christianity. In the view of the Ethical Culture Societies, says Gustav Spiller "no belief in a deity, no dogma, no authority is held superior to living the ethical life. The supremacy of ethics is the first doctrine

---

[3] *The Hibbert Journal,* October, 1915, p. 10 seq.

[4] *A Theology for the Social Gospel,* p. 15.

[5] The same, p. 16.

[6] *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology,* New York, 1913, p. 226.

[7] The same, p. 245.

[8] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 561.

taught."[9] Again this writer says: "The time spirit [instead of God's Word] rules in these societies."[10] One who attends the meetings of the ethical culture societies and of the more radical liberalistic churches will be struck by the similarity of the messages of these institutions. True, the meetings of the Societies for Ethical Culture are not opened by prayer; it will be recalled, however, that the radical liberalistic preachers, though they offer prayer, do not believe that prayer will be answered in any real sense; they do not believe in a God who answers prayer. But while these preachers claim to be representatives of Christianity, the leaders of the Societies for Ethical Culture do not make any such claim. And, it should be added, these societies have practically no success in the attempt to win people for their cause; the number of their members is exceedingly small. To all appearance the liberalistic preachers who defend the ethical interpretation of Christianity owe their small success to the fact that they claim to be representatives of Christianity and their societies to be Christian churches.

When we speak of the ethical interpretation of religion, the thought is not that liberalism interprets religion as *Christian* morality. In fact, a newer ethics has resulted from a new theology. The rejection of the inspiration of Scripture has destroyed not only the foundation of the faith, but of sound morality as well. The theories of evolution and of divine immanence do not offer an adequate substitute for the Scriptures as a basis for moral principle.

The doctrine of God's immanence inevitably revolutionizes the Christian moral conceptions. "God is now recognized as immanent in all creation," says a writer in a prom-

---

[9] *Faith in Man. The Religion of the Twentieth Century*, p. 187.
[10] The same, p. 188.

inent theological magazine, "things secular have disappeared because all things, in their time and place and proper proportion, have become holy."[11] While such is the opinion of this writer, there are, on the other hand, those who are aware that the very opposite is the case. Modern liberalism, under the guise of making all things holy, has secularized all things. "The total secularization of all life seems to be the set program of the modern world,"[12] says George Burman Foster. Professor G. A. Johnston Ross demands even that the church "must secularize God."

Modern thought, based on the doctrine of divine immanence, however, not only accepts the view that all things have become holy, but we are told that all acts of men are holy as well. "If God alone is and everything is God [or is the expression of an immanent God], vice is as divine as virtue, sin has no meaning and goodness no worth," says Alfred E. Garvie.[13] "If all thoughts are thoughts of God, and all events are acts of God, then our evil desires and purposes are purposes and desires of God, and all our sinful deeds are deeds of God. — The logical consequence is a denial of the genuineness of the distinction between good and evil, right and wrong."[14] Dr. R. J. Campbell, the author of a number of theological books, said in a sermon:

> Sin itself is a quest for God — a blundering quest, but a quest for all that. The man who got dead drunk last night did so because of the impulse within him to break thru the barriers of his limitations, to express himself, and to realize the more abundant life. His self-indulgence just came to that; he wanted, if only for a brief hour, to live the larger life, to expand the soul, to enter untrodden regions, and gather to himself new experiences.

---

[11] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1916, p. 513.

[12] The same, p. 164.

[13] *The Christian Certainty Amid the Modern Perplexity,* p. 11.

[14] *The Reformed Church Review,* 1917, p. 550.

That drunken debauch was a quest for life, a quest for God. Men in their sinful follies today, their trampling upon things that are beautiful and good, are engaged in this dim, blundering quest for God, whom to know is life eternal.

This is indeed a new doctrine. Not many years ago the editor of a well-known New York magazine which stands for religious liberalism, protested against the substitution of divine immanence for omnipresence. In recent years belief in divine immanence has become quite common in liberalistic circles. A writer in *The Reformed Church Review* points out that open pantheism is current in the world today. "Within the Church we are a little more careful about our statements," this writer says further; "yet here, too, there is a pantheistic trend. We are bidden to seek comfort in the fact that we are all divine and that God is present in the whole world."[15]

It has been shown elsewhere that some of the fathers of the new theology believed that there is no absolute truth, neither in theology nor in ethics. *This is the view of the more advanced religious liberalism in general.* Just as liberal theologians believe the Bible and Christian theology to be simply the result of man's thinking, they accept a similar view concerning morality also. To deny the divine inspiration of Scripture means that there is no absolute standard or norm for morality. Representatives of modern liberalism admit unhesitatingly that from their point of view there is no absolute right or wrong. Dr. James H. Tufts, Head of the department of philosophy in the University of Chicago, says rightly: "The newer ethics is itself as yet uncertain of its categories. *It does not know exactly what justice* [i. e. right and wrong] is."[16] Other liberal-

[15] The same, 1918, p. 244.

[16] *The Biblical World,* 1915, p. 13.

istic teachers of ethics agree with this view. "Ethical precepts thus are made relative to human needs instead of being referred to any superhuman or pre-human source," says Gerald Birney Smith.[17]

This means, as the last named writer also points out, that moral principles and precepts are to be explained from the evolutionary point of view: that the moral law is man-made and that it may be abrogated and changed by man. Again it means that, from the liberalistic point of view, to keep the moral law is not so important a matter, and transgression is not necessarily so serious as has been supposed and as Scripture declares.[18] The cries, "Back to nature," "Trust your instincts" have followed in the wake of discarding divine authority. The poet Maeterlinck says: "We no longer allow the rights of any of our lower instincts to be contested. We know how to justify and ennoble them by attaching them to some great law of nature." Sin, in modern theology, has become misfortune. It has lost its "exceeding sinfulness."

The modern view of conscience deserves to be noticed here. Modern liberalism regards conscience the product of evolution. Considered from the Biblical viewpoit conscience is a gift of God though to be a safe guide it needs to be enlightened by the Word and the Holy Spirit of God. The illuminated conscience has a real place in the Christian's guidance.

It is important to note that, for a long period after the rise of religious liberalism, the supremacy of Christian ethics was not questioned. Those who denied Christ's deity recognized Him, nevertheless, as the perfect moral example, "the ideal man." But within the last twenty-five years the

[17] *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology*, p. 89.

fact has been brought home to liberalists that, unless Christ was really divine, there is no good reason to believe that He never erred morally, or in other words, that He is the perfect moral example. If Christ was nothing more than a Jewish peasant, it would follow that neither His teaching nor His example is above criticism. In that case it would be inconsistent to regard His precepts as obligatory for our age. In consequence modern liberalism, having discarded His deity, now openly denies His moral supremacy. The cry, "Back to nature," has been boldly raised where formerly Jesus was held up as the supreme teacher of morality. Indeed, naturalism, to be consistent, must fall back on natural impulses for a moral guide.

The result of the modern view of ethics is a general moral decline. The present evidences of moral deterioration are of such nature that they cannot be ignored. Many are the voices of protest, not only from orthodox Christian circles but from the ranks of religious liberalists. Professor Stuart P. Sherman has the following to say on this point:

> Dante's phrase "that she made lust and law alike in her decree, to take away the blame she had incurred," sums up for me a deep, many-branched ruinous tendency of contemporary thought. *This is the logical conclusion of the naturalistic philosophy* which has been for many years subtly extending its influence in all countries and in every field of human activity. It is the logical conclusion of repudiating all standards, teaching one's conscience to trot in the rut of events, and making one's truth as one needs it. — The modern man "blasphemes the divine power" by identifying its dictates with his appetites, so that no check of religious superstition or of reasoned reverence remains in his consciousness to oppose the indefinite expansion of his "self-love." — I am as

certain as I can be of anything that God is a spirit who denies the validity of adopting the laws of the physical universe for the moral regiment of man.[19]

Moncure D. Conway points out in his autobiography that modern science has discredited faith in the supernatural, but has failed to furnish a sufficient ethical — let alone religious — guide. He quotes his friend, Professor Goldwin Smith, as foreseeing "fatal results to the next generation unless science can construct something to take the place of the failing religious conscience." This author also mentions the well known fact that Herbert Spencer, in his later years, deplored the regrettable moral results of modern science. Says Bertrand Russell:

> Purposeless and void of meaning is the world which science presents for our belief. That man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collocation of atoms [in other words, the result of blind force]; that nothing can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labors of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noon-day brightness of modern genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins, — all these things, this author points out, are held, practically beyond dispute, by modern naturalistic science.[20]

"The poison of destructive Bible criticism," says the *Lutheran Observer,* "has gone into the magazines, popular novels, high schools, lecture platforms — among all classes of thinking people. *And it is bearing fruit in moral decline.*"[21] An eminent English writer declared that "the

---

[19] *On Contemporary Literature*, Henry Holt & Co., New York, p. 9.

[20] *Philosophical Essays,* p. 60f.

[21] Quoted *The Bible Champion,* March-April, 1917, p. 129.

prevalence of agnosticism and skepticism as to all ethical principles" has resulted in "a well-nigh universal declension in morality which threatens to end in a total and permanent eclipse of the Sun of righteousness." Professor Guglielmo Ferrero, a well-known Italian scholar, said in 1913:

All the scruples and inner restraints with which, in the past, religion chastened the inner conscience of man, have fallen away and our civilization, so splendid and wealthy, is threatened with submersion beneath the mighty avalanche of three vices: fraud, immorality, and the arrogance of power....I do not wish to exaggerate the transgressions of our modern Babylon, after the manner of Catholic priests and Protestant clergymen. *It is nevertheless certain that modern civilization faces a grave crisis in the matter of morals.*

Philadelphia's best known Rabbi, Dr. Joseph Krauskopf, in his Atonement Day sermon, 1920, sounded a solemn warning of threatening disaster "unless both men and women take a stiff dose of the old-time religion to stiffen society's moral backbone. — Many who are pleasure-mad and indulge in the social depravities of today know that their excesses and indecencies and immoralities are iniquitous, but they have no longer the will-power to withstand them." Dr. Howard A. Kelly, of Johns Hopkins University, distinguished as a scientist and surgeon, said in a lecture:

Our country today is threatened with moral bankruptcy. I am not a pessimist or an optimist, but a steady searcher for truth as it exists. There are many indications of this moral degeneracy. Class feeling between rich and poor, the minimizing value of human life, the pleasure-mad habits of our people and the ever increasing amount of dishonesty in the body politic. With all these weaknesses of a nation there is bound to be the inevitable one of immorality of the sexes and its consequent train of diseases.

Years ago I used to hear men speak in lowered tones of the gay life of Paris. Today all our big cities, even our smaller ones,

offer as great opportunities for vice. Thank God, these terrible diseases are not quite so universal in America as on the continent of Europe, but they are bad enough.

Sylvanus Stall says, at no previous time in the history of this country has such a stress been put upon the virtue of our young men and women as today. The split skirt and X-ray garments of the women make our city streets and village thoroughfares a menace to every man who would keep his mind from evil suggestions. Doctor Yamei Kim, of the Pei-yang Woman's Medical School in China, on a recent visit to this country, remarked concerning the dress of women: "In big social gatherings in America and Europe I see many ladies wearing 'fast' dress. These ladies are vainly trying to show off their physical beauty, or suggest that they have it. It would be impossible for an Eastern woman of fine taste to wear the dress I often see in America and Europe." Dr. Winfield Scott Hall, a well-known Chicago physician, says of the dress of the modern woman: "Girls in their daily work, as well as women on the ballroom floor, have squelched their consciences and modesty to adopt the sensuous dress, with the result that immorality exists where otherwise there would have been decency and cleanliness." Ella Wheeler Wilcox wrote (in 1915):

Woman's idea of modesty seems to be very much of a theory and is not illustrated by her conduct, or her dress. The exhibitions of immodesty of dress which one sees in every drawing-room, in every ball-room, on the street, at lectures, and in homes, are appalling to most men. The American husband, who is the most liberal-minded being on earth, sometimes makes feeble objections, but usually ends by accepting the statement of wife and daughters that they must follow the fashions if they would not be considered quite out of the world.

The hero of the average comedy is a gay dog who spends his life in deceiving his elderly and trusting wife, and telling her im-

probable stories which she swallows without even the proverbial grain of salt.

He tells her that he is summoned to Mexico on business, when he really goes off on a spree; he represents the chorus girl with whom she catches him dining as his long lost and wealthy aunt; he conceals his feminine visitor in the office safe when his spouse comes down unexpectedly to his place of business, and we shriek with joy and amusement over his cleverness.

Apparently, not a thought of the immorality of the thing, and of the disgusting duplicity of a man who lies to his wife, enters the mind of the audience.

Perhaps the real answer to the problem of why divorce is on the increase may be found in the fact that we have made marital infidelity a subject for mirth. We condone it when we laugh at it.

There are the obscene-minded who only laugh at disgusting vulgarity. They find no story funny that has not a double *entendre* meaning. They go to see broad plays where the wit is coarse and every suggestion ribald. Outwardly these people may seem to lead decent lives, but sooner or later you will find that they have been indulging in the sensuality they found so deliciously amusing to hear about.

Rabbi Wise of New York said (in 1914): "Nearly all men and women were shocked when the wretched modern dances were perpetuated for the first time. If one were to enter a New York ballroom today for the first time after ten years' absence he would be struck dumb with disgust and astonishment at the degeneration which has come to pass within a little time." The same writer speaks in this connection of "the widespread moral deterioration which we see about us," the general lowering of standards, the evidences of which are many and multiplying."[22] Dr. John Haynes Holmes writes:

Dancing today, even among our so-called "best people," is indecent. In watching a dancing party at a seacoast resort this past summer, we noticed all kinds of dances and postures which,

[22] *The Literary Digest,* January 31, 1914, p. 210.

in the settlement and community center dances in the New York slum districts, the chaperons are under strict orders to forbid as immoral. Nowhere in our social life today is there such evidence of degeneracy as on the dance floor. The music is barbaric, the dressing immodest, and the dances brutally sexual.[23]

Referring to the refusal of the Methodist Church to admit actors and actresses into membership, the same writer says in *Unity*:

On the other hand, however, we wonder if the actors and actresses of our time are wholly without blame. Are they not earning their living in the service of an institution which is rapidly sinking to the lowest depths of moral degradation? Are not men and women, supposedly respectable, appearing nightly in plays which outrage every decent instinct of human nature? Are not the members of the profession, in other words, aiding and abetting the debauchery of the commercial managers, by consenting to do for them their dirty work? One cannot touch pitch without being defiled. One cannot act in a disreputable play without oneself coming under suspicion of being a disreputable character.

And again this writer says:

The New York theatrical season [1920], which sets the pace for all the rest of the country, seems just a little worse this year than it has ever been before. Crude vulgarity competes with indecency presented in the guise of gorgeous spectacle, and both threaten to be engulfed by the mounting flood of inane futility. The Broadway stage is crowded with women who are actresses only in the sense that they are willing to expose their nakedness to the public gaze, and with men whose only qualifications are the ability to tell a dirty joke in a dirty way.

A well-known secular magazine has the following in an editorial on the present-day theater:

To all but playgoers of the very newest generation there must occasionally come the thought that there has taken place a vast change in our toleration of things on the stage. The theater does not hesitate nowadays to put into vivid representation topics and occurrences which the reviewer may well hesitate to mention by

---

[23] *Unity*, September 23, 1920, p. 21.

name in even the cold abstractness of type. Marital infidelity has always been a legitimate dramatic motive, but formerly it was suggested, not shown. Today it is given to us in full detail, and our authors and producers have come to look upon seduction and rape as perfectly legitimate material for frank depiction before miscellaneous audiences.

The ethical interpretation of religion, or the identification of religion with morality, is clearly the denial of the Christian teaching that true morality needs religion for a foundation. Liberalism, declaring that there is no religion but morality, makes morality its own foundation. Religion is disowned and a new morality substituted for the Christian morality. Modern moral teaching, with which religious liberalism is identified, finds itself in evident bewilderment. Modern religion as such is nothing more than a name. It has been well said that men in our day cheerfully give up the substance but never the name of Christianity. "Religion in these days is the more praised as it is the more attentuated and dissolved," said William Hayes Ward, formerly editor of *The Independent*.[24] Another theological writer, Professor John A. W. Haas says: "If, then, finally the authority of the message is gone, we are left without any authority, religion is adrift and optimism is a pure speculation. We are hastening through our modern liberalism into conditions of religious dissolution which no sentimentalist can deny."[25] Professor Walter Scott Athearn, of Boston University, speaks of "the present tide of indifference, luxury, and commercial greed," and remarks: "We are fast drifting into a cultured paganism. — In fifty

---

[24] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1909, p. 229.
[25] *The Lutheran Church Review*, 1917, p. 188.

years crime has increased four hundred per cent. Something must be done to underpin the virtues of our people."[26]

To conclude the subject of the New Morality we quote a noteworthy paragraph by Professor Stuart P. Sherman:

The great revolutionary task of the nineteenth-century thinkers, to speak it briefly, was [considered to be] to put man into nature. The great task of the twentieth-century thinkers is to get him out again — somehow to break the spell of these magically seductive cries, "Follow Nature," "Trust your instincts," "Back to Nature." We have trusted our instincts long enough to sound the depths of their treacherousness. We have followed nature to the last ditch and ditch water. In these days, when the educator, returning from observation of the dog kennel with a treatise on animal behaviour, thinks he has a real clue to the education of children; when the criminologist with a handful of cranial measurements imagines that he has solved the problem of evil; when the clergyman discovers the ethics of the spirit by meditating on the phagocytes in the blood; when the novelist, returning from the zoological gardens, wishes to revise the relations of the sexes so as to satisfy the average man's natural craving for three wives; when the statesman after due reflection on "the survival of the fittest" feels justified in devouring his neighbors — in the presence of all these appeals to nature, we may wisely welcome any indication of a counter revolution.[27]

---

[26] *Religious Education and American Democracy,* p. 11.

[27] *On Contemporary Literature,* p. 10. In connection with the subject under consideration the book *The Menace of Immorality in Church and State,* by Dr. John Roach Straton, deserves mention.

XIII

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

The new theology rejects the Bible teaching on man's sinfulness and the Biblical conception of the world. The "exceeding sinfulness of sin," the existence of Satan and his kingdom, and the need of supernatural salvation are denied. For the Bible message of *personal* reconstruction the social gospel substitutes the call to *social* reconstruction.

Not long ago the General Secretary of Home Missions of one of the more prominent evangelical denominations in a public address set forth the nature and meaning of the social gospel, he himself being an ardent advocate of it. His address in substance follows.

The main root of the social gospel goes back to the doctrine of divine immanence. If God is the immanent world energy, there is no room for moral or religious dualism.

The thought that there is a kingdom of evil besides the kingdom of God is all wrong. There is only one kingdom and every man is a citizen of it. Since there is only one immanent life force, the world is a unit and man also is a unit. There is no room therefore for the old conception of sin. Furthermore there should be no attempt made to draw a line of distinction between things religious and secular, holy and unholy, Christian and non-Christian, the church and the world. Sin is, in the last analysis, not a personal but a social evil. It is the result of improper social conditions. So

long as our social order is not Christianized, sin will ever be present with us. It is impossible to lead a Christian life except in a Christianized society. Yet if we accept the thought of divine immanence, sin and evil cannot be quite so bad as they seem to be. Considered from the viewpoint of the social gospel the thought that God would damn a man because of sin is offensive.

Since man is inherently good and all men are God's children, there is in modern religion no place for individual salvation. The divine plan of salvation of which conservatives still speak is superstition. What is needed is not individual but social salvation. For although the world is God's kingdom, it does not follow that all is developed to perfection, or is incapable of further improvement. Such a conception would not fit into the scheme of general evolution. Salvation has become a social term. It means that the world must be made better socially by reforms and social improvements of various kinds, by education and moral advancement.

In a word, the social gospel addresses itself to the task to make the world a decent place to live in. This is the business of the church in the new age. Considered in its true light this endeavor is essentially religious, it is the manifestation of true spirituality. What was formerly spoken of as religious is of value only in so far as it serves social ends. If my life is a unit, then all that pertains to my life is an object of the church's mission

Such is the modern social gospel. The Biblical Gospel of salvation is "restated"; the Cross is given "a social interpretation." For true spiritual religion we are offered a substitute having no other purpose than to make the world a decent place to live in. The new gospel is the gospel of externalism. It is assumed that favorable external conditions will bring about the moral regeneration of society and that human nature will respond automatically to its better environment. Salvation is to come through civic, economic, social and political remedies. Until the individual's economic and social desires have been satisfied, they tell us, it is both useless and illogical to preach to him morality and spirituality. To Christianize the social order, rather than

the individual, or in other words, to make the world a decent place to live in, is supposed to be the great task of the church.

The social gospel therefore lays enormous emphasis on a man's physical and material well-being. Religion is held to be nothing more than a plan for social welfare. Christianity is considered a scheme of social improvement. It is reduced to humanitarian and social endeavors. It is interpreted in terms of materialistic humanitarianism. Education and sanitation take the place of personal regeneration and the Holy Spirit. True spiritual Christianity is denied.

The social gospel is in fact religiously indifferent. It holds that the difference between Christianity and other religions is in degree, not in kind. Yet the social gospel comes under the cloak of religion. We are told that the spirit of loyalty and devotion shown towards modern social endeavors deserves the name of religion and Christianity. "The man who enters thoroughly into the social movements of his time," says Professor Edward Scribner Ames, of the University of Chicago, "is to that extent genuinely religious, though he may characterize himself quite otherwise [i. e., though he may be an avowed unbeliever]. Non-religious persons are accordingly those who fail to enter vitally into a world of social activities and feelings."[1] John Herman Randall says: "The simple fact is, we are living in an age that is fast becoming socialized from top to bottom, and individual religion, like individual ethics, must give way to broader and more social conceptions."[2] "The rapid and significant development of Christianity in the interests of what is called the 'social gospel.'" says Professor Gerald Birney

[1] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1908, p. 543.
[2] *Humanity at the Cross Roads*, p. 291.

Smith of the University of Chicago, "is really part and parcel of *a humanizing of religious interest.*"[3]

The social gospel is proclaimed in numerous books and magazine articles as well as from many pulpits. Countless representatives of modern liberalism are defending it. "Our old religion was a process of saving a few souls here and there out of a world that we condemned as bad," says a prominent Methodist preacher of the State of New York; "the new religion is a community affair, and we will make our towns and our cities the right kind of places so that everybody will be a Christian as a matter of course. When it used to be hard to be good, it will become difficult to be bad." Individual salvation is practically spurned and denied. A minister of a Unitarian church in New York said recently in a sermon: "No man is satisfactorily saved unless he is a member of a saved home; there cannot be a saved home unless there is a saved community, nor can there be a saved community until there is a saved world."[4] In other words, salvation is wholly a matter of social advance.

Considering the question from the viewpoint of New Testament Christianity some fatal weaknesses of the social gospel are in evidence. The new gospel identifies essence and fruit. Making social service the most important feature of Christianity, the fruit is mistaken for the essence. In fact, the fruit is divorced from the tree that produces it. Social betterment is excellent as the outgrowth of Christianity; the attempts to make it a substitute for the Christian religion have signally failed. The social gospel overlooks the fact that man's greatest needs are of a spiritual nature, and hence the greatest service to man is to supply

---

[3] *The Biblical World,* May, 1919, p. 254.

[4] Quoted in *Our Hope,* July, 1919.

these needs. The new gospel ignores the vital and fundamental issues that have to do with man's spiritual well-being and true betterment. The primary duty of the church, namely, to give spiritual food to the souls of men, is set aside. It is a wholesale effort for the improvement of mankind on the surface rather than for betterment in the mainspring of the heart where the seat of evil lies.

Christianity recognizes the fact that personal reconstruction through the Gospel is the greatest factor in bringing about real and lasting social betterment in the world. John Morley, a noted British author, gives the following significant testimony:

> We all have been upon the wrong track, and the result is that the whole of us have less to show for our work than one man, Booth [of the Salvation Army]. Herbert Spencer, Matthew Arnold, Frederic Harrison, and the rest of us who have spent our lives in endeavoring to dispel superstition and to bring on a new era, have to admit that Booth has had more direct effect upon this generation than all of us put together."[5]

The social gospel, then, fails to distinguish between *Christian* service and *social* service. But the two are not identical. The successful business man, or laborer, is rendering valuable social service though he may not be a Christian, or he may be a Christian only nominally and hence may be lacking the Christian motive that is essential to Christian service. It is quite true that the meanest manual labor is sanctified and becomes elevating when it is done from a Christian motive, "as unto the Lord." But this does not mean that such work is in itself of equal importance with the more direct Christian work which has to do principally with leading men to Christ and caring for their spiritual welfare. The apostle Paul making tents in Ephe-

---

[5] *The Harvard Theological Review,* July, 1916, p. 318.

sus did an important work. It enabled him to continue his labors to which the Lord had called him. But great would be the world's loss had Paul been of the opinion that secular work in itself is as important as the preaching of the Gospel, and had given his whole time and effort to tent making and other kinds of social service. Had Paul even devoted the entire income from his business to Christian purposes, he would have made a mistake. It was not the work to which God had called him. Yet there are plenty of men who are called of God to make tents. If they do their work from the same motive as Paul did his work and are as faithful as Paul was, their reward in the day of Christ will be equal to that of Paul. Christian work done from the Christian motive must be distinguished from social service in which this motive is absent.

Another glaring weakness of the social gospel is that it does not address itself to all classes. If social service is the whole of Christianity, then those who are unable to render such service are deprived of the privilege of being Christians. The social gospel has no message for the halt and maimed, the suffering from cancer and tuberculosis; no message for the dying. To those whose souls cry out for the living God the message of the new gospel is a mockery.

Professor Thomas N. Carver, a radical religious liberal, calls attention to another flaw in the gospel of social service, namely its indefiniteness. He points out that "under the old doctrine of salvation Christian work had a definite meaning. It meant saving souls.....bringing them into the kingdom." He says further:

> It is not enough to preach the gospel of work unless you mention the job at which you expect people to work. Instead of merely saying, "Work, for the night is coming," it is necessary to be somewhat specific and say (if the metre can be fixed up), "Improve

this road, for the night is coming. Build this bridge, for the night is coming. Drain this swamp. Improve this crop, for the night is coming

In the absence of some kind of doctrine of salvation work means little more than persuading people to join the Church. Under these conditions, the Church becomes very much like an initiation society, such as you would find in many colleges.[6]

The pastor of a Unitarian church — formerly a Presbyterian minister — writes:

Not very long ago the livest and most vigorous denominations had two objects, which really amounted to one, that were perfectly clear in their own consciousness and to the world, — the conversion to goodness of those who were not good, and the building up in goodness of those who had been converted. All their efforts were directed to the accomplishment of these definite ends. Their conception of what constitutes goodness and of the way to put one's self in possession of it was doubtless crude and in large measure mistaken. They had involved goodness in a network of abstruse theology. But nevertheless, sticking close to the Bible, as they understood it, they drew the people, held their grip on them, and promoted real goodness in their lives. Fundamentally these forefathers were right. And they held the people because both they and the people knew that they were right. We *who have discarded conversion and growth in grace as outlandish absurdities, and the Bible too,* or at least have reduced them to the flabbiest kind of thing, who have left ourselves without any clear object, who are driven hither and thither by every wind of doctrine and sleight of men, *are in mortal error, and the world knows it.*[7]

A reason why the social gospel is lacking in definiteness is that the task which it would lay upon the church is too extended in scope. Social service is a very broad term. A number of writers, as for example Professor Edwin L. Earp, of Drew Theological Seminary, are of the opinion that the church should identify herself with the Rural Life

---

[6] The same, July, 1915, p. 384.

[7] *The Christian Register,* August 26, 1920, p. 12. Italics mine.

Movement. To make the country church a success, we are told, the church must make it her business to build up a prosperous farming community. The rural preacher must be an agricultural expert. He must concern himself with the problems of better seeds, better breeds, better implements, and up-to-date methods of farming. As a prominent religious periodical summed it up some years ago, a minister should be trained to "save the crops of his people, as well as their souls." There have been arranged agricultural summer courses for ministers. "It is the plan to teach the rural pastors how they may help the farmers to get better crops by applying scientific methods," we read in a prospectus for such a course, "so that the farmers in return may learn better church-methods."

If it is the church's business, however, to teach agriculture to rural populations, can she consistently overlook the fact that the cities are teeming with those whose usefulness could be greatly enhanced by further training in the occupations which they are following, and who also should be won for the church? — For the church to accept the modern program of social service would be not merely to neglect the work to which she is called, but it would mean that she become a "Jack of all trades and master of none" — a real obstacle to general efficiency. American agriculture must be in a bad way if the farmers need the ministers to teach them how to raise pigs and grow corn.

Rejecting, in short, the Christian view of man's sinfulness and of an evil world, the social gospel prescribes reformation as the needed remedy. Reformation and man-wrought changes are believed adequate to make the individual as well as the world all that is to be desired. Now it cannot be questioned for a moment that reform is good in its place. If a thief ceases to steal and begins to work

for an honest living, he is doing a praiseworthy thing. Christianity does not hold the absurd view that the vicious and profligate are as desirable members of society as they who live honorable lives. But it is the church's business to stand for Christianization in the New Testament sense, not for mere reformation. A sinner who reforms is not for that reason a Christian. Reformation will not change the human heart. Regeneration is the work of God.

Walter Rauschenbusch has written *A Theology for the Social Gospel.* The title of this book is significant. The substance of its contents is not claimed to be *the* theology but *a* theology for the social gospel. This author's primary interest was the gospel of Socialism. Theology was to him, as it is to modernists in general, quite a secondary matter. Its value is, in his view, to be measured by the possible service it could be made to render the social gospel. This new liberalistic theology is supposed to be a thing to be used rather than accepted as true. Rauschenbusch's theology is by no means the foundation for his gospel, but is itself founded on the social gospel. He admits that some other theology may be built on the principles of Socialism and he knew that the great majority of Socialists do not accept his theology. In fact nearly all the leading Socialists, following in the footsteps of Karl Marx, their greatest representative, look upon all theology with contempt. Rauschenbusch never made the claim that Socialism would not be successful without accepting his theology, but he hoped that his theology would aid the cause of Socialism by making it acceptable to professing Christians. In one instance he makes this honest confession: "Of course some of the ideas I have ventured to put down are simply a play of personal fancy about a fascinating subject."[8] All this

means that "the theology for the social gospel" is not a matter of vital concern to the cause of Socialism nor to any other cause.

"The social gospel is believed by trinitarians and unitarians alike," says Rauschenbusch, "by Catholic Modernists and Kansas Presbyterians of the most cerulean colour. It arouses a fresh and warm loyalty to Christ wherever it goes, though not always a loyalty to the Church."[8] But since the social gospel, as represented by this author, rejects the deity of Christ, it is incorrect to say that it is accepted by trinitarians. Again, deny Christ's deity, and the Jesus you have left is not a person deserving loyalty. Could you honor as a leader a mere man who said in regard to his own person what Jesus said about Himself: "I am the light of the world — the way, the truth and the life — the living bread come down from heaven; before Abraham was I am; all power is given unto me in heaven and on earth," etc? Would not one saying these things about himself, unless they are true, deserve sympathy and pity, rather than honor?

Dr. Lyman Abbott in the *Outlook* recently said that church attendance is not an index to religious interest, because men read religious articles in magazines and express their worship in social service. Indeed modern churchgoers are often told that such service is the leading interest of Christianity. It is generally known that in the modernized churches the emphasis is laid on social service, reform, and morality. Addresses on subjects of this nature are largely taking the place of the sermon. May not this be one of the principal causes of the decline of church attendance? A layman writing in a theological magazine com-

---

[8] *A Theology for the Social Gospel,* p. 238.

[9] The same, p. 148.

plains that the attempt of the church to "Christianize the social and civil life of the world" through social service has resulted in the secularization of the church by the world. He deplores the fact that this cry of warning should come from a layman, and that of the clergymen (who, as a rule, were trained in liberalistic theology) "not one in ten" will agree with his view. He says further:

The sacred edifice heretofore dedicated to the worship of Almighty God has now become the center of secular functions. We now go to church to hear sermons on the minimum wage, adequate housing of the poor, the regulation of moving pictures and the dance-halls, how to vote, and the latest vice-investigation report. Billiard and pool-tables are being installed, dancing classes are organized, and all sorts of amusements offered to entice the youth within its sacred precincts. A child returning home from Sunday-school recently was asked by its mother the subject of the lesson. It was how to keep the streets clean. Another Sunday, kindness to dumb animals furnished the subject of the lesson, and this was a graded Sunday-school up to date. A good woman who had suffered greatly with a recent sorrow brought herself to church longing for some comforting word. She heard a sermon on the Charity Organization Society and the Visiting Nurse.

Ministers of the Gospel are willing to preach on every subject under the sun except the Gospel, and when they begrudgingly mention the Gospel, they almost tell us it is not divine, but a man-made thing. They have relegated to the brush-heap most of the sacred doctrines and many of them even deny the validity of their own divine office as ministers of God. All comes from man, nothing from God. Perhaps this is the reason so many ministers look down on empty pews and complain bitterly that their members do not come to hear the sermons prepared with so much labor.[10]

Social service as a substitute for the old Gospel message has been tried out by Unitarians and other liberal churches. There is abundant proof to show that it has utterly failed, a fact that is persistently ignored by its present advocates.

---

[10] *The Reformed Church Review*, April, 1916.

The churches which have embraced the social gospel, says a writer in the *Harvard Theological Review,* "have distinctly weakened their life and influence."[11] A writer in the *Biblical World* says:

The secularization of the activities of the church has weakened its spiritual life and emptied its pews of devout worshipers. — Today altruism has largely superseded churchly Christianity, and social service in a very material manner has made many churches in our land a social club or an executive committee for the engineering of social activities.[12]

A prominent Unitarian minister writes:

During my sixty years of service in the Unitarian ranks *I have seen scores of organizations go down to defeat* because they did not make religion the one all-important element in their work and in their appeal to the public. Let me cite instances of this kind. A minister and his wife took charge of a Unitarian church that was fairly prosperous and immediately threw themselves with ardor into every available kind of social service. Among other good things they organized an unsectarian literary club which attracted some of the best people in the city. Some years after, the minister's wife was eagerly telling me of the wonderful success of the club, when I asked, "How about the church?" "Oh, that is closed." was the answer.

In another church there was a popular preacher who always drew a large congregation of people who were interested in the various radical reforms that he advocated, but his audience was a procession and not a compact congregation. As soon as the people whom he attracted became familiar with his idiosyncrasies they ceased to attend his church. He once said to me, "I have seen enough people go through my church to build a city." I repeated his remark to a brother minister who said, "And they never go to church again."

A well-known literary man said to me, "Some of us thought we could do without the church, so we met on Sunday morning and discussed literature and sociology; but after a time we learned

---

[11] *The Harvard Theological Review,* July, 1916, p. 314.

[12] November, 1914, p. 312.

that the church had something to give that we did not get, and so we adjourned our meetings and went to church."[13]

Social reform, as differentiated from the social gospel, ought to be a principal concern of every government. It is in no sense a substitute for individual regeneration and for the Christian religion. Despite the most desirable reforms people may be materialistic and godless. Col. Raymond Robins, of Chicago, gives the following report from a land which is well-known for its political reforms:

In Australia, foremost in legislation for women and children, where the eight-hour day is the universal day, where municipal ownership of railroads, trams and telephones prevails, where that whole social program has been worked out, a labor party is in full command of the three industrial states. "Surely," you say, "everything will be happy and beautiful there." Well, in the streets of Sydney I saw more drunken men and women than I ever saw in Chicago, and the whole community was getting the uneconomic mind, the something-for-nothing attitude. Why, you could see whole groups stand in line on Saturday afternoon waiting to bet a portion of their week's wages in government protected lotteries. A greater illegitimate birth rate prevails there than in any other nation of which we have record, and a lower general birth rate in the cities than of any nation of which we have record. Why? Material prosperity. Seven million people fringed around an area as large as the United States.

Maxim Gorky, the noted Russian author, writes:

What alarms me most is the fact that the social revolution does not bring with it any sign of spiritual regeneration among men. It does not seem to be making men more honest. It is not lifting their self-esteem nor the moral value of their labor. At least one does not notice among the masses that the revolution has lifted or quickened their social conscience. Human life is appraised just as cheaply as it was before. The habits of the old regime are not disappearing. The new authorities are just as brutal as the old ones were and, in the bargain, their manners are worse. The new

[13] *The Christian Register,* November 14, 1918, p. 6.

officials permit themselves to be bribed just as easily and they send men to prison in herds as the old did. Physical force has merely been transferred. But this does not in any way help the growth of new spiritual forces among us. The rectification of wrong can come only through the development of our spiritual forces."

Various representatives of the social gospel, among them Walter Rauschenbusch, have said, it is impossible to be a Christian so long as our social order has not been reconstructed along socialistic lines. No one can live a Christian life, we are told, in an unsocialized commonwealth. So, as concerns personal salvation, the social gospel, according to its own representatives, means that we cannot hope to be Christians at the present time. Considered from a Christian viewpoint it must be said, therefore, that the social gospel brings a message of despair.

XIV

RELIGIOUS DEMOCRACY, THE DENIAL OF GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

Democracy means the rule of the people, in contrast to autocracy, or the rule of a king or prince. But what is *religious* democracy?

Religious democracy does not mean the right of self-government for the church, it does not mean congregational (sometimes called democratic) church government. In the sense in which this term is now often used by representatives of the religious liberalism *religious* democracy means the abolition of the rule of God in the religious realm, just as *political* democracy means the deposing of a king, or the renunciation of his authority in the political realm. As in a truly democratic state the king, if there be a king, has been democratized and has only such authority as the citizens of the state may see fit to grant him (in other words, he is a king in name only), so religious democracy demands that the ruler — God — must be democratized, i. e., he must be shorn of His power and authority. It is an attitude similar to that of the servants in the Parable: "We will not have this one to reign over us."

It seems superfluous to repeat here that, according to Scripture teaching, God is the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. The human family divides itself into two classes, as concerns their relationship to God as His subjects.

The sinner is in rebellion against God; yet God has authority over him. There is for him a day of reckoning coming. The true subject of God is the one who has become His child by regeneration. It is true, therefore, that God in His kingdom rules "with the consent of the governed," since those who do not give their consent to His rule are not His true subjects; they are outside of His kingdom Nevertheless, it goes without saying that God does not derive His power and authority to rule from the governed. In other words, His kingdom is not a democracy; it is necessarily a holy autocracy. This, by the way, does not mean that there is any room for priestcraft or priest-rule. While our Lord has given His church a degree of authority, it is to be remembered that the church, in the language of Scripture, is the body of believers.

The fact deserves notice that the sphere of the state, or body politic, is quite different from that of the church. Its task does not concern the salvation and spiritual welfare of mankind, not the spreading of the Gospel or the administration of church government. Its work is confined to the sphere of morality. While it is true that religion is the true foundation for morality, the maintenance and propagation of religion is not within the proper sphere of the civil government. The state's business is the regulation of civil affairs, the protection of the law-abiding, the punishment of evildoers, the repression of vice. A union of church and state is inconsistent both with New Testament Christianity and with true democracy. Though the state is an institution of God in the sense that He has ordained its existence and it is His will that they who are citizens of His kingdom render willing obedience to the state (provided always that the state does not exercise tyranny over the conscience), the fact remains that the state is not, and

from the nature of things cannot be, established on the same basis as the church. The state is not and does not pretend to be the kingdom of God. The church, on the other hand, is God's kingdom (in its present form) to the extent that it measures up to the New Testament standard; in other words, in the degree that God rules it and has His own way with it. This means that while the kingdom of God is not identical with the church, it is within the visible church. The church, then, is established on a religious, spiritual basis; the state is founded on the principles of morality, of legal right, of righteousness.

The word democracy is derived from *demos* which means the people. A modern democracy is a rule of the people; the people have it in their power to elect their own law-makers and officers for the administration of the government in accordance with the law.

In a modern democracy the people are strictly speaking ruled by their representatives in office. Nevertheless the name democracy is properly applied, provided that the representatives truly represent the people and unselfishly seek the people's weal. Self-seeking motives, partisanship, bossism, corruption, "mobbings" in a democratic state are indications that democracy has not yet passed the experimental stage. Corruption in politics means autocracy of the most objectionable type. It is true that general education of the citizens is needful in a democracy; the supposition, however, that education will suffice to qualify for citizenship and for the administration of government has proved erroneous. Democracy depends for success primarily on the moral character of the citizens. So long as among the citizens of a state there may be those who lack in moral qualities, there is a possibility that such may be entrusted with responsible positions. While the state can-

not demand Christian qualifications on the part of its officers, it is clear that only men of integrity and satisfactory moral character can consistently serve in civil offices.

As for the administration of the affairs of the church, there is no ground, Scriptural or other, for entrusting it to an ecclesiastical ruler, or, for that matter, to a few such rulers. If religious democracy meant the rejection of ecclesiastical autocracy, it would be decidedly acceptable. What it does mean is the denial of the rulership of God, particularly His sovereignty in the sphere of religion. Religious democracy is, as intimated in a preceding paragraph, the rejection of the fundamental truth of God's sovereignty.

Walter Rauschenbusch, the well-known theologian of religious democracy, tells us *we must save God by democratizing Him.* "The worst thing that could happen to God," this writer says further, "would be to remain an autocrat while the world is moving toward democracy. He would be dethroned with the rest [of the rulers]."[1] President Arthur Cushman McGiffert, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, says: "Democracy demands a God with whom men may co-operate, not to whom they must submit."[2] "The principle of democracy," says Professor Errett Gates, of the University of Chicago, "arose first of all in the political sphere, but it was found to be equally applicable in the religious sphere."[3] Dr. Frank Crane says in a magazine article: "Are we to go on regarding God as an absolute monarch when the idea of absolute monarchy has been discarded among men?" Dr. Henry Frederick Cope, the General Secretary of the Religious Education Association, in his book *Education for Democracy,* describes

---

[1] *A Theology for the Social Gospel,* p. 178.

[2] *Religious Education,* June, 1919, p. 161.

[3] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 437.

religion as "gradually emerging from the notion of a dictator deity to the leadership of a splendid Brother in the great Human family." "The democratizing of religion," says Professor Herbert Alden Youtz, of the Graduate School of Theology, Oberlin, "is one of the significant processes that is taking place just now at an unprecedented rate."[4] This author proceeds to point out that this democratizing means a radical transformation in our very conception of religion or in "our way of conceiving the living God and His relationship to our world." Again he says:

> Our Christologies and our doctrines of God are being democratized. — There is a superficial way in which a man may democratize his theology by going over it and substituting for the Monarch God, a democratized divine Ruler; substituting a Republic of God for a Kingdom of God. This is necessarily an artificial thing to do.[5]

Professor Gerald Birney Smith shows that religious democracy does not accept beliefs or practices imposed from above.[6] Various liberal theologians have pointed out that modern thought, accepting God's immanence, objects to the idea of a Father God. The new world-order, in their opinion, demands a God who is nothing beyond a "comrade in the struggle of the race," as Professor Albert Parker Fitch says, or, more accurately, one whose comrades we become by working for social ends. And yet the doctrine of God's fatherhood was only recently very popular in liberalistic circles.

The advocates of the demand that God must be democratized do not believe in God as He has revealed Himself in Scripture. They accept the modern idea of an imma-

---

[4] *Democratizing Theology*, p. 4.

[5] The same, p. 5.

[6] *The Biblical World*, November, 1919, p. 637.

nent God,[7] or, in other words, a god who is not a personal Being, who is not distinct from the world but is a part of it. When they speak of God they evidently mean either a blind cosmic energy or a mere concept of the mind. They believe that God, as a person, has no real existence. In their opinion God is the product of our own thought and imagination; He exists only in our own mind and is, as it were, what we may see fit to make Him. Professor Roy Wood Sellars, of the University of Michigan, says: "All of man's ideas are human ideas, and so his ideas of his God and the very personality and moral outlook of that God reflect the social standards which are in force around the individual."[8] Says Walter Rauschenbusch: "The conception of God held by a social group is a social product." And again: "Our consciousness [or conception] of God is the spiritual counterpart of our social consciousness."[9]

It is strange, is it not, that a man of Walter Rauschenbusch's erudition, in order to make Christianity acceptable to the defenders of the social gospel, can forget himself to such extent as to say that God must be saved by democratization, and unless this is done, the world will dethrone Him. But to democratize God means nothing less than to dethrone Him, unless it be supposed that God, like vain man, would be willing to occupy the throne while He is shorn of that for which the throne stands, namely of His power and authority. To democratize God is, as John Haynes Holmes rightly says, "to shift the basis of religion from God to man;" it is to accept a humanitarian instead

---

[7] On the close connection between the doctrine of immanence and the idea of religious democracy cf. Dr. Gerald Birney Smith, *Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, p. 517.

[8] *The Next Step in Religion*, p. 161.

[9] *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 167 and 179.

of a theistic basis for religion. In its last essence this can mean only one thing, namely the denial of God. The God of our fathers is dethroned — speaking now from the viewpoint of the representatives of religious democracy — and, as a recent writer said, He is replaced *by a God elected on a platform of approved social and political ideals.*[10]

Can there be an excuse, we must ask, for representatives of religious liberalism, to still use the name of God and claim to be theologians, when their god is a mere concept of the mind? Is it possible to have anything but pity for a supposed being which comes, as it were, under the guise of God, proclaiming that the basis of religion is in man and that there is no other God but man and his great ideas. Is it possible that the belief in such a god as that is supposed to justify the term *religious* democracy?

The question is here pertinent: How can modern religionists worship a God whom they have, suppositively, democratized? Some of them, be it said to their credit, have declared that they cannot. A modernist who is a member of an evangelical church says: "Personally I have gotten to the point where I regard all worship as idolatry."[11] The denial of a personal, almighty God makes worship indeed idolatrous. The representatives of modernism fail to give us a good reason why a democratized God should be worshipped. Such worship, being of an idolatrous nature, cannot be taken seriously. Necessarily it has degrading results.

To democratize God is to discard true religion. The representatives of religious democracy hold that democracy itself is religion and that it is the only religion that is worth while; there is, in their opinion, no religion but

---

[10] *The Unpartizan Review*, January-February, 1920.

[11] *Friends' Intelligencer*, September 6, 1919.

democracy. This is the denial of religion. We are told that there is no difference between democracy and *religious* democracy, and that the former is identical with the latter. "Democracy is a social faith; it is a religious faith," says Professor Theodore Gerald Soares of the University of Chicago.[12] Gerald Birney Smith is of the opinion that "*the triumph of democracy is now the chief concern of the church* and that all theological training should be to that end."[13] "I worship the God," says Professor George Albert Coe, of the Union Theological Seminary, "who, breathing himself everywhere into the human clod, makes it a spirit, a social craving, even the spirit of humanity, yes, the spirit of a possible world society. *I bow my spirit before the Spirit of the world democracy that is to be.*"[14] Dr. Coe and other writers on the subject have discarded the use of the phrase "kingdom of God" in favor of "democracy of God." But is not this a misnomer? If the democratizing process include God Himself; if religious democracy be simply democracy, it is difficult to see a good reason for speaking of the democracy of God.

Religious democracy is closely related to the so-called social Christianity. Edward Scribner Ames says rightly that modern religion "is referred to as the religion of the spirit, as social Christianity, and as the religion of democracy."[15] The opinion that democracy is religion is founded partially on the claim that Jesus was "the first great democrat," and that the burden of His message was the establishment of a proper form of civil government. Walter Rauschenbusch intimates that had Jesus lived for thirty

---

[12] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1919, p. 124.

[13] *The Biblical World,* May, 1918, p. 302. Italics mine.

[14] *Religious Education,* October, 1916, p. 379. Italics mine.

[15] *The New Orthodoxy,* p. 10.

years longer He would presumably have been more successful in that which He undertook to do.[16] There is no objection to the idea that all men are in a sense religious; it is quite a different matter, however, to identify religion with democracy and assert that all men, being religious, are democratic in sentiment. Those who make such assertions would do well to remember that some of us are from Korea.

While Walter Rauschenbusch and other representatives of religious democracy commend worship and sanction the existence of the church, they do not hold that the church should be a permanent factor in a true democracy. The church, in their opinion, is useful only as a possible medium to educate the masses into a democracy such as they desire. A true democracy, they believe, has no need for the church as a separate organization. They favor an ultimate union of religion and state. Their position on this point, however, differs radically from the older state-churchism in which state and church, though closely united, were separate organizations. It should be observed that, if God is democratized and there is no religion but democracy, the existence of a particular religious organization is uncalled-for; it is in fact precluded. For a democratic state of that description it would be inconsistent to permit various religious organizations within its borders. "Both dogmatism [or evangelical Christianity] and ecclesiasticism [i. e. insistence on the right of religious organization] are in their inmost nature sectarian;" says Professor Coe, "they have always divided Christians from one another." Religious democracy, it is supposed, cannot tolerate anything that divides men. It is needful there-

---

[16] *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 266.

fore, the same author insists, that we advance "to a fully social position,"[17] that is to say, a position which ultimately knows neither dogma nor church. This author says further: "A particular religious fraternity within the community, though its doors be wide open to everybody, is not, and cannot be, the solution of this problem."[18]

Religious democracy, as advocated by many liberalistic writers, does not and cannot make a distinction in principle between Christian and non-Christian, believer and unbeliever, saint and sinner; hence it can well spare the services of the church. We again let the defenders of a "democracy of religion" speak for themselves. Henry T. Hodgkin, a prominent British "Friend" of the liberalistic type, says:

> The point at which to begin is the basal conviction that every man is essentially religious.[19] — It is true that there are people who say quite positively that they are not religious, that they do not know this instinct, etc. It may fairly be asked, however, whether this apparent absence of a "religious instinct" is not due to a complete misconception of religion — the very misconception we are here seeking to remove.[20] — Religion is a necessary part of every man's life. That is not to say that every man is religious in the conventional sense — far from it, thank God! It simply means that any idea of religion which is limited to the few [the Christian believers, for example] is, from the nature of the case, false. — *Democratic religion....claims sinner not less than saint.*[21]

It follows that there is no longer a real need for the existence of the church.

Religious democracy, or social Christianity, demands that our religious institutions must ultimately be brought

---

[17] *A Social Theory of Religious Education,* p. 262.

[18] The same, p. 323.

[19] *Lay Religion,* p. 54.

[20] The same, p. 195.

[21] The same, p. 32. Italics mine.

under community control. Joseph Ernest McAfee who is holding an important office in a religious organization and is the author of a book on *Religion and the New American Democracy,* says:

> If American society perfect its democracy, its religious institutions must come under community control. This implies that all sect labels must come off and sectarian control must be abolished. This is essential from the point of view of democracy. Enlightened Christian forces should join with democracy to transform the present order and abolish the sectarian system.[22]

These sentences might be taken to mean that all Christian sects should be asked to unite into one religious body. This is not the opinion advocated by this author, however. His demand goes much farther. Hear him:

> Sectarianism would not be abolished with the merging of all Christian sects into one. That might only aggravate its evils. A strong sect can do more mischief than a weak one. What democracy needs to complete its program, and what Christianity needs for its emancipation, is the abolition of the whole sect program and the eradication of the whole sectarian principle and spirit.

This means, as this author takes pains to point out, that the Christian church as an institution or organization must cease to exist. "A real world-society is not possible with a divisive, competing, warring religious society," says Dr. Henry F. Cope.[23] President McGiffert writes: "Democracy demands the abandonment of this traditional notion of religion and the recognition of it as a communal affair having to do with the salvation of the community, that is, in ordinary language, with the establishment of true liberty and human brotherhood."[24]

---

[22] Article *"Can Christianity Tolerate the Church,"* in *The New Republic,* January 18, 1919.

[23] *Religious Education,* 1919, p. 223.

[24] The same, June, 1919, p. 161.

One would suppose that "social Christianity" and "religious democracy" stand for toleration and not for religious tyranny. The contrary is true, however, as may presently be shown. The charge of intolerance is sometimes made against evangelical Christianity. We readily admit that the Christian church cannot take the position of general toleration in the sense that she could ignore the difference between the Bible faith and the modern rejection of the faith. That every man has a right to his own religious belief is true in the sense that the truth must not and cannot be forced upon any one. As citizens of a free state we properly demand and concede the right of religious liberty. But this does not mean that the church should not definitely accept the Christian truth, or that believers could religiously fellowship non-believers. President George E. Horr recently remarked: "It is frequently said that a man has a right to think as he pleases. That is just what no living soul has any right to do. His only right is to think according to the facts of the case and according to the laws of thought." No one, in fact, has a right to think wrongfully and come to hurt. But, on the other hand, the fact must be recognized that truth cannot be instilled by any other means than teaching and persuasion. The attempt to spread the truth by coercion or persecution is contrary to Christian principles. Therefore evangelical Christianity demands of the state general toleration on the basis of free citizenship. But, as already said, the fact must not be overlooked that the church cannot take the position that all men, whether they are believers or not, have a right to membership in the church. Such a position would make the church lose its Christian character. Even the Masonic Order is reckoning with the fact that not all men stand for Masonic principles. And the

Unitarians do not and cannot fellowship those who insist on Scriptural orthodoxy. This is not intolerance. "How can two walk together except they be agreed?"

Evangelical Christianity, then, is identified with the principle of liberty of conscience and of general toleration within the sphere of the state. The state cannot consistently espouse the cause of any particular religious sect; it cannot assume the task of the church. For the state to admit only Christian professors to citizenship would be as inconsistent as if the church opened her doors to non-Christians or, in other words, if she discarded the faith.

The representatives of the modern religious views would have us believe that evangelical orthodoxy is antagonistic to democracy. Now if by "democracy" they mean *religious* democracy, as this term is now often used, or theological liberalism, we willingly concede this point. New theology leaders do not properly distinguish between religious democracy and political democracy, and therefore decry the Bible faith as the enemy of democracy. According to Professor William Frederic Bade, of the Pacific School of Religion, the orthodox view of the authoritative nature of Scripture "is the last bulwark of autocracy."[25] Gerald Birney Smith says:

An autocratic [i. e. evangelical] *religion cannot prepare citizens for democracy.* — If, submitting to the authority of Scripture, we are training men to think of Christianity as something unchangeably there by divine decree....we are training men in autocracy.[26] — We cannot maintain one kind of authority in our political life and a totally different kind of authority in religious life unless we wish religion and democracy to be mutually distrustful. To insist on blind submission in religion is a spiritual preparation for blind submission to autocratic power in the state;

[25] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1919, p. 234.

[26] *The Biblical World,* July, 1919, p. 422.

it is fundamentally opposed to the ideals of democracy.[27]—A church that holds to orthodox views belongs to the old regime rather than to the age of democracy.[28]

This means that representatives of religious liberalism denounce orthodoxy as the enemy of democracy and claim that evangelical Christians who accept the Scriptures as God's Word are not true democrats. It is insinuated by liberalists that orthodox believers reason in a fashion something like this: God, the All-mighty, All-wise, All-loving, All-righteous, has autocratic power, therefore there ought to be on earth autocrats who lord it over their fellows. It is assumed by representatives of liberalism that those who recognize the sovereignty of God and teach unquestioning submission to Him, cannot be true democrats. Is not this a most outlandish insinuation? Or, is it true that the evangelical Christians of our land cannot consistently support our democratic institutions? Do they favor autocratic government? Is not the contrary true, that the very backbone of true democracy are the ones who, instead of attempting the democratization of God, willingly submit to His sovereignty? Is not democracy a miserable failure where the belief in a sovereign God is banished from the people's thought? Does not Russia at the present time give us an object lesson showing the real meaning of the democratization of God? The supposition that, since there ought to be no autocracy on earth, it follows that God also should be shorn of autocratic power, is absurd.

Religious democracy, in short, demands of us that we renounce the sovereignty of God and the Lordship of our Lord Jesus Christ. It would assign to our Lord the office of mere democratic leadership. "What kind of a leader

---

[27] *The American Journal* of Theology, July, 1917, p. 346.

[28] *The Biblical World,* May, 1919, p. 255.

do we need?" asks Henry T. Hodgkin, and his answer is: "Viewed from the standpoint of democracy, we may say that we need a leader who is one with the led, not coming from above but raised from the ranks, and that he must be the servant of the community, not its 'boss.'"[29] The same writer says, the orthodox view of Jesus Christ involves that "He is not one of us." "Such a leader," he says further, "cannot be in a real sense a part of our everyday life, still less can He be the servant of the community."[30] This is the oft repeated liberalistic claim that we must "make Jesus real" by denying His deity. It is argued that a divine Jesus is not "one of us." This claim rests on the false premise that Jesus was not both human and divine. But Scripture teaches that Christ was human ("one of us") as well as divine, very man and very God. It is impossible to accept the opinion that a merely human, failing Jesus would be more real. Dean Shailer Mathews has well said on this point: "We can never make Jesus real by reducing him to the level of people with whom we gossip over our back-yard fence."[31] This statement is all the more remarkable because Dr. Mathews does not defend the orthodox doctrine of the deity of Christ, though obviously he perceives that, even from his point of view, the process of "humanizing" Jesus has been carried too far.

The thought that a democratic leader, instead of a divine Savior and Redeemer, is needed, is quite unacceptable. Even the atheistic, anti-religious social democrats of Europe profess to see in Jesus a democratic leader. If Jesus were nothing beyond that, it would be difficult to see why so much should be made of His leadership. Unprejudiced

---

[29] *Lay Religion,* p. 182.

[30] The same, p. 183.

[31] *The Biblical World,* May, 1920, p. 226.

Socialists admit that Karl Marx and August Bebel were greater leaders in the field of politics and Socialism than Jesus. It is, therefore, difficult to see why men who see in Jesus nothing more than a leader of democracy, cling to the Christian name. They would have us profess Christianity but deny the Lordship of Christ; they want us to renounce the Lordship of the Master, but cling to the supposed democratic leadership of Jesus of Nazareth.

Now a true believer in our Lord, who has been saved through His grace, will at any time lay down his life rather than deny the faith by renouncing the Lordship of the Savior. Not only must the believer realize that without Christ's divine Lordship there could not be salvation, but he will count the unconditional surrender to Him his greatest privilege, the only true freedom. The apostle Paul loved to refer to himself as a bondservant, literally a "bondslave" of his Lord, and again he refers to Him in the well-known words: "Whose I am and whom I serve." Christianity minus faith in Christ as the divine Redeemer, minus recognizing His Lordship, is necessarily either laughing stock for the prince of darkness, or it is a mighty tool in his hands.

From the view that evangelical Christianity is antagonistic to true democracy there is only a short step to the demand that orthodox Christianity should not be tolerated in a modern democracy. Such demands have in fact been made and apparently, without a protest by representatives of liberalism. "A humanist's religion," observes Professor Roy Wood Sellars, "can admit no cunning division into the things which are God's and the things which are Caesar's."[32] Joseph Ernest McAfee says:

---

[32] *The Next Step in Religion,* p. 213.

No one who believes in essential Christianity should resist the process of bringing our religious institutions under community control. — Religion, like every other universal human concern, must be brought under community control, if democracy is fully to vindicate itself. A church bearing a sect name and exploiting society in the interests of a sect idea cannot be tolerated by a thoroughgoing democracy. Religion is too vital a social function for its institutions to be monopolized by private corporations.[33]

This program, then, provides for a liberalistic state religion, a union of religion and state. It will be recalled that such was also the position of Karl Marx and other Socialist leaders. The new state religion is to comprise Christians, non-Christians and atheists — anti-Christians — alike. Yet it is by no means doctrinally indifferent. An organization that stands for the democratization of God and the denial of Christ's Lordship is naturally inimical and hostile to Christianity. No believing Christian could join himself to a religious world society of this character.

Mr. McAfee, it is interesting to notice, bases his demand for the abolishment of the Christian church on the claim that Christianity will fare better if the church can be eliminated. The church, he thinks has a "demoralizing" effect on Christianity. "In the nature of the case," he says, "an ecclesiastical organization cannot serve the purpose for which Christianity is in the world. Being a spirit and not an institution, the attempt to institutionalize Christianity sacrifices its genius. — An official Christian Church by its very nature must be un-Christian."[34] In other words, the attempt is made to justify the proposed suppression of the Christian church on the supposition that the elimination of the church would prove a blessing. Now this was essentially the position of the persecutors in all ages. Even

[33] *The New Republic,* January 18, 1919.

[34] The same, January 18, 1919.

Nero claimed he was doing a good work by putting to death all Christians. In the dark ages the persecutors advanced precisely the same argument as the modern representatives of religious democracy. They claimed that great blessing would result if the persecuted ones, instead of suffering for their faith, would accept the faith of the dominant authorities. Therefore persecution was believed to be justified.

Is it not strange indeed that they who claim to represent democracy and toleration propose the suppression of the Christian church? And at the same time representatives of religious liberalism accuse the defenders of the Bible faith of intolerance. Dean Shailer Mathews brands the Christian believers of the Biblical type, as represented by the Bible Schools, as *reactionaries* and says, if their efforts should succeed "Protestantism would become dangerous to intellectual and religious liberty."[35] It is the old story. Evangelical Christianity, insisting on the right to stand for definite doctrine, is accused of an attitude that is inimical to religious liberty. The fact is willfully overlooked that influential modernists are favoring the suppression of the church and of the Christian faith as well as of every other religious creed. Religious democracy — liberalism — and general socialization are to be established by secular means. Religion is to be "placed under community control."

---

[35] *The Biblical World,* April, 1917, p. 202.

XV

THE NEW VIEW OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Christian church has always regarded Christian nurture and education as one of her chief interests. No words need be lost here concerning its importance. Modern liberalism has substituted *religious* education for *Christian* education. While it is true that in conservative circles the term religious education is sometimes used synonymously with Christian education, in general modern usage religious education has acquired a meaning that differs radically from the meaning which it had in Christendom before the rise of modernism.

Representatives of religious liberalism tell us that Christian education of the older type produces "secondhand religion." A recent writer says: "Secondhand religion is no religion. It is a wretched makeshift."[1] This is true, if by this term is meant a mere knowledge of the Christian message without the personal acceptance of it, or a form of religion without a vital relationship to God. There are, however, liberalistic writers who use the phrase "secondhand religion" in a new sense, as will directly be shown.

The new theology comes with the claim that it is a mistake to accept the Bible as God's Word. The message

[1] Hodgkin, *Lay Religion,* p. 41.

of Christianity, we are told, is of a social nature and necessarily varies and changes with the nature of the particular social improvements that are supposed to be in order. Since Christianity, in the opinion of modern liberalists, has no fixed, definite message of truth or doctrine, a Christian religious teacher should not profess to have definite religious truth to offer. Any claim of this sort, they tell us, can only produce secondhand religion in those who are taught. The way of orthodoxy, says Dr. Herbert Alden Youtz, of Oberlin Theological Seminary, is "to give the people a secondhand account of God."[2] Modern interpreters of religious education tell us that children should not be left under the impression that there is definite Christian truth in which they may be instructed. Professor George Albert Coe, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, who is perhaps the most prominent American writer on this subject, argues that we ought not "to impose beliefs [or doctrines] upon children."[3] "The aim of instruction," he says further, "is not to impose truth but to promote growth [namely growth toward social efficiency]. *The instruction must be emptied of its traditional implications of telling pupils what to believe.* To impose such beliefs upon a child [in other words, to tell a child what to believe] is not to promote the growth of a free personality."[4] This author says further:

> When we have made clear to ourselves what sort of world the Father and we as his children desire [in other words in what direction to bend our endeavors for social improvement], must not our next concern be that the young also should desire it? What boots it if they know all Scripture, all doctrine, etc., if they have not both the forward look and the sort of desire that can

---

[2] *Democratizing Theology,* p. 12.

[3] *A Social Theory of Religious Education,* 1917, p. 65.

[4] The same, p. 1. Italics mine.

reconstruct a world? — Let the curriculum be drawn from any sort of material.[5]

Similar views have been expressed by other advocates of the new theology. The supposition that the Bible is the source of religious truth, is considered out of date by modernists. Liberalistic writers agree on the point that the source of the divine is world-wide. A recent writer says on this point:

To find it we must trace it out through all its devious course. To hear its message we must listen to the voice of the grass and birds, of the winds and of the stars, and to the still small voice within our own heart. That is poetical, no doubt; but how shall we make out any intelligible meaning in all these multitudinous voices and myriad revelations? There is too much discord and contradiction and confusion. There is good and there is evil; there is wisdom and there is folly; there is the permanent and there is the fleeting. Shall we put it all on one level and say: "All is Truth, all is Mind, all is God?" How about the evil? Is that merely an illusion of mortal mind? Surely we cannot trifle with evil like that; it is too deep and tragical to be simply set aside by a wave of the hand. Or if we want to distinguish, what shall be our standard of judgment?[6]

Since, then, according to religious liberalism, the divine is scattered, as it were, throughout the whole world, the curriculum for religious education is to be drawn "from any sort of material." It must not be drawn from the Bible as the one true source of religious enlightenment, nor from books based on the Bible, such as the catechism, for this will give the pupil a fixed or definite idea of religious truth and the result, we are told, will be secondhand religion. A Unitarian preacher says: "The fault is that we have asked people to begin their religious life by accepting certain teachings about God. But this is just a reversal

[5] The same, p. 66.

[6] *The Reformed Church Review,* 1918, p. 244.

of the natural order. When we make an acquaintance we do not presume to know all about him at the outset. Rather we wait to see to what extent our confidence may be well placed." In other words, the child is to settle these questions without taking either the word of the teacher or the word of Scripture for it. "The influence of the catechism [or of definite religious instruction] in tending to stereotype the idea of God upon the minds of the young," says Henry T. Hodgkin, "is wholly and utterly bad. In the very subject on which children should be our teachers, we presume to teach them."[7] Do we hear rightly, then, that the children should be the religious teachers of their elders? Our Lord commended certain traits in the character of children, it is true; the point in question however is, did He appoint the children as the religious teachers? Did He charge the apostles to tell the world to listen to the message of babes, or did He give the apostles a message of salvation to proclaim?

It is somewhat difficult to see wherein the task of the liberalistic religious teacher consists. Not only does he decry the authority of Scripture but he is not supposed to give the pupil the result of his own endeavor to find the divine. In this make-belief religious instruction the pupil himself must by his own effort gather the divine from world-wide sources. Is it possible, one is tempted to ask, that any normal person is taking such views of religious education seriously? The sum and substance of all this learned talk about modern religious education is, that the children of Christian parents should be permitted to grow up in heathen ignorance and darkness. True, the modern religionists, as a rule, have no objections against instruc-

[7] *Lay Religion,* London, 1918, p. 196.

tion in morality, but the same may be said of representatives of non-Christian religious systems.

It may be worth while to notice that among the radical modernists there is at least one who openly rejected the thought that the young should not be given religious instruction. Walter Rauschenbusch says: "If every individual had to work out his idea of God on the basis of his own experiences and intuitions only, it would be a groping quest, and most of us would see only the occasional flitting of a distant light. By the end of our life we might have arrived at the stage of voodooism and necromancy."[8] Another liberalistic writer says: "Neglect of religious instruction, in order not to bias a growing mind, is usually laziness camouflaged as liberalism. What other subject is neglected for a like reason? — A home without any religion, however liberal, is a dangerous place for a child to be born in."[9]

The modern view of religious education is defended in various books on the subject published in recent years. Prominent and representative among these books is the one by Professor Coe, from which we have quoted in a preceding paragraph. This author identifies religion with social reconstruction and democracy. Hence he defines religious faith as the endeavor to reconstruct society through the means of reforms of various kinds. Religious education is interpreted in social terms; it is identified with social education. Now this is the general position of religious liberalism on the point of religious education. The leading recent writers on this subject are defending this view. The purpose in religious education, says Dr. William

[8] *A Theology for the Social Gospel,* p. 168.
[9] *The Christian Register,* July 8, 1920, p. 19.

Irvin Lawrance, of the Unitarian Church, "is to socialize our pupils." And again this writer says:

Whatever culture really enlarges the sympathies and multiplies contacts and stimulates to service is to be classed as religious education.[10] — There is urgent need that religious educators break away from conventional usages and recast their curricula along broader lines. What may be taught? Everything that is true either as fact or as illumination.[11]

Religious Education, the organ of the Religious Education Association, says editorially: "We must get away from the concept of religious education as a secluded area of interest for the people who wish to add the facts of religion of the child's curriculum. Religious education is as broad as life itself....it is the science of human growth."[12] In other words, all worth while education is religious education. It is supposed that the church, when engaging in religious education, should have for her aim not the dissemination of New Testament truth but the socialization of the pupils.

The interests of religious education in the modern sense are represented in America principally by the Religious Education Association. There is plenty of evidence to show that this Association is representative of the modern religious education movement, as advocated by the authors quoted in previous paragraphs. And various denominations, as well as the Federal Council of Churches, have officially recognized it and are working with it. The Committee on Education of the International Sunday School Association have published a statement in which — having previously referred to "invaluable agencies" in American secular education — they say: "The field of religious edu-

---

[10] *The Social Emphasis in Religious Education,* p. 36.

[11] The same, p. 34.

[12] Vol. XIV, 1919, p. 290.

cation has such an agency in the Religious Education Association. Such associations should be encouraged as essential to the development of a scientific program for a democratic people."

It may be worth while to observe that the Religious Education Association owes its existence principally to William R. Harper, the first President of the University of Chicago. From its beginning it stood for religious liberalism. "In the Religious Education Association Unitarians have been welcome from the first and have had a voice in its councils and occupied official positions," says a Unitarian writer. In 1913, after the annual meeting of this Association had been held in Cleveland, Minot Simons, the Unitarian minister of that city, wrote:

> I am deeply impressed with the fact that the Religious Education Association is one of the most liberalizing forces of the modern religious world. I have been quite amazed at the theological radicalism which I have heard during the past week. — The R. E. A. deserves our support as Unitarians because it is doing our work to an extent that we little realize.

Of the annual meeting of the same association, for 1919, which was held in Detroit, with Samuel A. Eliot, President of the American Unitarian Association, as chairman, a report was published in the eastern Unitarian church paper. "Can we do better," asks the Unitarian writer of this report, "than to give thorough and hearty co-operation to the Religious Education Association which welcomes us without reserve or discrimination, and *which preaches our message* of education in religion with such persuasiveness and power?"[13] Dr. Durant Drake, Professor of Philosophy at Vassar College, recently recommended the R. E. A. as *the most important liberalizing agency of the day*.[14]

---

[13] *The Christian Register*, April 3, 1919, p. 13.

[14] The same, July, 17, 1919.

The membership of the Religious Education Association is not confined to those who profess the Christian faith. This association, says Charles W. Eliot, of New Religion fame, "acts on the principle: diversity in opinion or belief, unity in conduct or action."[15] It is open to all men and women of whatever religion or denomination who "desire to promote moral and religious ideals in education, and educational ideals in religion." Henry F. Cope, the General Secretary of the Association says:

> Its membership constitutes a world-group united in a common social life and forming a common fellowship of aim and service. This aim lifted men and women [not only Christian men and women but also those of other religions] above the [religious] controversies which had hitherto divided them, so that in the Association representatives of the great religious faiths [both Christian and heathen] find themselves standing on a common platform. Its members represent almost every great religious division. They are one in the common faith that life's ultimate product is spiritual and is to be realized [not by supernatural means, or divine grace, but] by those known and orderly processes of development which we call educational."[16]

This is plain language. Educational religion or religious education takes the place of supernatural salvation. This modern world-movement does not stand for anything particular in the way of religion. It is so broad in principle and scope that it cannot take a definite stand in favor of any existing type of religion. With pride the Religious Education Association points to its universal broadness that embraces even heathen religions. In short, the R. E. A. takes a position of neutrality in matters religious, though it bears a religious name. The devil-worshipers in darkest Africa may not be represented in it, but presumably they would be eligible for membership.

---

[15] The same, May 29, 1919.

[16] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1917, p. 386.

Modern religious education does not have a religious message or definite religious truth to teach. Just as, from the modernist viewpoint, not the content of theology, but the method is the principal thing, so also in religious education the method is supposed to be all in all. Hence Christian believers and representatives of virtual atheism as well as Buddhists and Confucianists are invited to join hands in this work. Schools of religion — "religious community schools" — have been organized in America in which anything unacceptable to non-Christians is carefully avoided. But the fact remains, as Herbert Alden Youtz has aptly said, that "excessive emphasis upon practical methods often conceals spiritual deadness. *Here is the fatal weakness of much religious education.*"[17] Yet unless theology has a definite religious message, it is but natural to consider method the principal thing.

The modern religious education movement, then, defines religion as socialization and identifies religious education with social education. Professor H. W. Holmes describes religious education as *"an effort to establish religion as a unifying and creating force in social evolution."*[18] The General Secretary of the Religious Education Association says: "The program of religious education is nothing less than the reconstruction of society through the wills of men."[19] And again this writer observes: "Today religious education is concerned with the whole program of education so far as it deals with persons as religious persons and so far as it looks to a religious order of society."[20] Now a religious order of society, in the language of liberals,

[17] *Democratizing Theology,* p. 32. Italics mine.
[18] *The Christian Register,* August 5, 1920, p. 13.
[19] *Religious Education,* 1919, p. 224.
[20] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1917, p. 384.

is the realization of what is known as social reconstruction — the religion of democracy. All endeavor that serves this end, "looking to a religious [i. e. democratic] order of society" of this kind, is considered religious work. Social service is identified with religion. It goes without saying that all legitimate, worth-while work is social service and, considered from this viewpoint, is religion. A person engaged in such work is claimed to be a religious person. This means that religion and religious education is everything, and nothing definite. Education, in so far as it has to do with teaching doctrinal, supernatural religion, is not recognized as a worth while phase of religious education; modern thought is decidedly antagonistic to definite doctrinal teaching.

The serious pertinent question is, How is it to be explained that men and women who profess evangelical Christianity make common cause with this modern world-movement and with the Religious Education Association in particular? It cannot be denied that the true character of this organization is clearly recognized by religious liberalists. Is there a possibility that the evangelical men who consent to labor with this society are not as well informed about its character and aims as are the liberalists? Obviously their support of this movement is entirely inexcusable. Some may say that while they have accepted the invitation to speak in one of their annual meetings, no fault can be found with the contents of their addresses. The point however is, as all thinking persons know, that by your very presence as a speaker you made your influence count in favor of what this society stands for. Is it possible that there are conservatives who fail to see this point? We have, in passing, never heard that any speaker in those meetings had the courage to give testimony for the Bible truth

against modernism. To do so would be contrary to the rules and would not be permitted.

Chautauqua, an institution having its origin in a camp-meeting, has always considered religion one of its interests. It is generally known that in more recent years some of the Chautauquas have been conducted in a way highly satisfactory to liberals. Particularly is this true of the original Chautauqua Assembly. Of the session of 1920 a Unitarian writer says:

> The specific interests of religion have been in the hands of such men as Dr. Cornelius Woelfkin, Dr. Alexander J. Grieve, President Lynn Harold Hough, Bishop W. F. McDowell, Dean Shailer Mathews, and Dr. F. F. Shannon. Unitarians coming away from the great Amphi-theatre service each Sunday morning are wont to exclaim with satisfaction.[21]

Thomas M. Roberts, a Unitarian, says of the same session at Chautauqua: "I was so pleased with *the leavening process* going on there, that I should like our Unitarian people to continue to affiliate with other denominations in this very important educational work."[22] Again a Unitarian writer says in the *Christian Register:*

> The quiet influence of our representatives at Chautauqua, entering in friendly spirit into all good works there going forward, has disarmed sectarian suspicion and led many to see the real meaning and purpose of the Unitarian movement. — It is significant that our entrance into organic relations with other churches at this large centre of religious activity is through the channel of religious education.[23]

Dr. Durant Drake, speaking of modern religious education, says: "The great hope of the church lies in educa-

---

[21] *The Christian Register,* August 26, 1920, p. 19.
[22] The same, September 30, 1920, p. 16.
[23] The same, p. 16.

tion. When education is tenfold as prevalent, there must be either a great revolution in the church or a great withdrawal from it."[24] It can not be doubted that modern religious education, if it be approved of the church in general, would result in a complete liberalistic revolution and the eclipse of "the faith once for all delivered to the saints."

[24] From an address, as reported in *The Christian Register,* July 17, 1919.

XVI

THE MODERN VIEW OF MISSIONS

Religious liberalism has from the beginning been either indifferent or antagonistic to Christian missions. In recent years there has been a change in its attitude to missions. Liberalism, as represented by those who have accepted the new theology, is now professing friendliness to mission work. This change of attitude is due to a new view regarding the nature and purpose of missions which has come to prevail in liberalistic circles. The modern view of missions stands in strong contrast to the evangelical view.

Professor Edward Caldwell Moore, of Harvard University, in an article on *The Liberal Movement and Missions,* points out that "for the missionary achievements of the nineteenth century the churches described as orthodox have been almost wholly responsible." Liberal churches, he says further, "have sustained missionary endeavor in but slight degree," and "the liberal element within the so-called orthodox churches....has frequently excluded itself" from the missionary enterprise. "Hostility to missions, lack of sympathy with the aims, dissent from the methods of those eager in this [missionary] propaganda,

[1] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1913, p. 22. Italics mine.

have been almost a party badge of the so-called liberal Christianity."[1] The same author, in his book on *The Spread of Christianity in the Modern World,* shows that rationalists and liberalists were "hostile to missions" for the reason that missions stood for the Biblical doctrine of salvation, just as the liberals were also "alienated from the church at home" for the same reason, namely because of the fidelity of the church to the Bible faith.[2] This testimony is altogether in accordance with fact.

The real cause for this negative, declining attitude of liberalism to Christian missions is not far to seek. True missionary work is always based on the conviction that you have the truth and the truth must be given to others. "The real belief in absolute truth," says a writer in *The Unpopular Review,* "is a missionary state of mind, and carries with it the faith that truth is the one thing worth having."[3] Modern liberalism denies the possibility of knowing absolute religious truth. Furthermore it considers all questions of religious doctrine and truth as secondary. Therefore it has no positive religious message. The best in Christianity and the best in heathen religions is, according to the new theology, only subjectively, or relatively, good. If Christianity be better than some of the non-Christian religions, we are told, the difference is only in degree, indeed in some instances in but slight degree. The fact is that some of the liberals—the Unitarians, for example—frankly confess to their own substantial unity with certain heathen religions. A Unitarian writer, having called attention to the fact that religious liberalists have more in common with the Reform, or Liberal Jews than with orthodox Christianity, proceeds to say:

---

[2] P. 87.

[3] July-September number, 1918, p. 96.

Then we think of other non-Christian religions. Has it not been the Unitarian group that has led in the affirmation that *there are no heathen religions,* that there is one Father over all, and all true thought and feeling, yes, all dim groping after truth and right, is as divine in origin as the word of Hebrew seer or Christian leader?"[4]

Indeed, the Unitarians, as will be presently pointed out, glory in their co-operation with pagans, such as the Brahmo Somaj of India, a Hindu society which is antagonistic to evangelical Christianity, but friendly to Unitarianism. The Hindu poet Tagore, by the way, who is well-known for his enmity to the Christian faith, represents the viewpoint of the Brahmo Somaj.

Professor Francis A. Christie, of the Unitarian theological seminary, Meadville, Pa., in an article on *Unitarianism,* says:

What corresponds to the customary foreign mission work [in evangelical denominations] exists [among the Unitarians] in the relations sought by the Unitarian body with [pagan] circles in India and Japan. The typical instance is the friendship and co-operation established with the Brahmo Somaj of India.

Professor Christie adds that students of the said Hindu society who resort to Unitarian theological schools in America "find an essential agreement in faith." "The Unitarians think of the Brahmo Somaj," he says further, "as their own movement expressing itself in terms of Indian tradition."[5] "The bond of union among us all," said another Unitarian professor, referring to Unitarians in America, "is the fight against the deity of Jesus Christ." Obviously and naturally heathen religionists are included in this bond of union.

It is to the Unitarians' credit, however, that they do

---

[4] *The Christian Register,* January 15, 1920, p. 60.

[5] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1917, p. 566.

not claim their entering into relations with Hindu and other heathen bodies, and recognizing them as representing "their own movement"—that they do not claim this to be mission work, though the writer just quoted says, it corresponds to mission work. Some of the liberals within evangelical churches, on the other hand, evidently think it the purpose of missions to enter into "relations" and religious fellowship with non-Christian peoples. Representatives of religious liberalism in evangelical denominations are of the opinion that the missionary should not come to the heathen claiming that Christianity is the one true religion, but he should appreciate the heathen religions and learn of them, and in turn have the heathen people appreciate Christianity and learn of it.

It is a noteworthy fact that liberalism in general admits that it has been influenced by the heathen world. Dr. Miller, the founder of the Christian College of Madras, wrote: "Remember that the Hindu religion has given the world the great truths of the immanence of God and the solidarity of mankind."[6] Henry T. Hodgkin, Secretary of the British Friends' Foreign Mission Association, formerly missionary in China, says:

> It is the missionary's duty to interpret to the West [i. e. to Christendom] all that is highest and purest in the East [i. e. in heathendom], seeking to set forth the true humanity, the simple-hearted faith and love *to be found in all religions* and races, so that those who have sent the missionary forth may be drawn to love and appreciate those to whom he goes. It is the missionary's high calling to interpret West to East and East to West by sympathy and true understanding."[7]

The science of Comparative Religion "has flooded the world with a new light," says Dr. William R. Lawrance.

---

[6] Randall, *Humanity at the Cross Roads,* p. 317.

[7] *The World Tomorrow,* June, 1919, p. 161. Italics mine.

It has shown that "back of religions [both Christian and heathen] is religion, and each [religion of the world] is appreciated and the whole [namely universal religion] is apprehended through sympathy."[8] The great heathen faiths should be studied, says this writer, "not to catalogue their errors but to understand them." Missionary education should teach Christians "to appreciate non-Christian peoples and their religious faith, and to approach them [on the platform of universal religion] in a spirit of helpful comradeship," instead of undertaking to convert them.[9] Professor Gerald Birney Smith, of the University of Chicago, says: "Gradually we have come to see that it is religiously desirable that the Christianizing of non-Christian peoples shall mean *the strengthening and purification of the best religious and moral traits of their native faith,* rather than its complete eradication."[10] Dr. John Herman Randall writes: "What an opportunity is presented today for religion to realize, at last, its true mission in the world and, minimizing all differences, begin to magnify those things common to all religions."[11] At the World's Sunday School Convention, held in Tokyo, in 1920, Prince Tokugawa in an address said of the convention's message and purpose: "It is not a mere Christian propaganda; it is part of that greater propaganda of the Religion of Humanity, which makes us feel that all the world is akin."

The view, held by the representatives of the new theology, that mission work means the "interpretation" of Christianity to the heathen peoples on the one hand, and the "interpretation" of the heathen religions to Christen-

---

[8] *The Social Emphasis in Religious Education,* p. 97.

[9] *The Christian Register,* May 22, 1919, p. 12.

[10] *The Biblical World,* November, 1919, p. 638. Italics mine.

[11] *Humanity at the Cross Roads,* p. 229.

dom, on the other, raises a number of puzzling questions. It is readily seen that the supposed task of such interpretation could not furnish the essential motive for mission work. This modern way of reciprocal religious interpreting implies that heathenism is met on a common basis and is recognized as one in essence with modern Christianity. Besides, if the new theology view of the Christian faith is accepted, namely that Christian doctrine is to be considered as of only secondary importance, to acquaint heathen peoples with it must also be a secondary matter. Neither could religious liberalists consistently expect to find the doctrines of non-Christian religions to be of a more vital character than the doctrines of the Christian faith. It follows that interpreting the West to the East and the East to the West can not be a matter of primary religious import. *And such interpretation cannot reasonably be named mission work.* Be it repeated here for emphasis that the Unitarians are showing good sense by their refusal to speak of their own work as mission work when they simply enter into fellowship with representatives of heathen religions recognizing them as co-workers in a common cause.

But the new view of missions includes more than mere mutual interpretation of religion. Its burden is the social gospel. Instead of working for the salvation of individuals by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, it undertakes to save society by socialization and reforms of various description. Dean Shailer Mathews, of the Divinity School, University of Chicago, says on this point:

> We used to regard the foreign missionary as trying to save brands from the burning. Now we can see he is also putting out the conflagration [making endeavor for individual salvation unnecessary]. He is a messenger of good will, an ambassador of

the higher internationalism of the kingdom of God.[12] — If Christianity can only rescue brands from the burning but has no power to put out the fire [then we have] a religion doomed to disappear with the advance of ethical liberalism.[13] — The new social interest of Protestant Christianity.....*wants to save men into heaven by embodying the principles of the kingdom of heaven in the state.* It is less concerned in rescuing people than in educating them to keep them out of danger.[14]

Professor Gerald Birney Smith says:

Today the missionary enterprise is being shifted from a program of rescuing a few souls from eternal disaster to the ideal of a long campaign of education and social reconstruction in the non-Christian nations. — Increased emphasis is being laid on the claims of the social and political future of the non-Christian peoples on this earth.[15] — The Great Commission was [formerly] regarded as an autocratic [authoritative] command to be obeyed. Today missions are justified and supported by looking forward and seeking to meet the [social] needs of the future. — Humanly determined programs are being substituted for dogmatic decrees in the work of the churches. This is genuine democracy.[16] — *The missionary enterprise is rapidly being conceived as a democratic social program* rather than as the rescue of a few individuals from the divine wrath. To reconstruct the social life of a people in all its phases is the end of the gospel. Education is coming to be a primary means of accomplishing the missionary task. — In a word, when the missionary enterprise is seen to be a democratic religious movement, it gives to Christianity a task of supreme importance.[17]

This author who, by the way, is the Professor of Systematic Theology—Christian doctrine—in one of Amer-

---

[12] *The Biblical World,* March, 1915, p. 129.

[13] The same, December, 1914, p. 374.

[14] *The Constructive Quarterly,* March, 1913, p. 108. Italics mine.

[15] *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology,* p. 110.

[16] *The Biblical World,* July, 1919, p. 423.

[17] The same, November, 1919, p. 638. Italics mine.

ica's largest divinity schools, defends the view that "a democratic religion [such as liberalists desire to represent] must exist by human consent rather than by a claim of divine rights [or by building on the authority of God's Word]."[18] In other words, Christianity is humanized and, on the mission fields as well as elsewhere, is identified with social reconstruction—the new democracy. The effort is no longer to save the individual from sin by preaching and teaching the Gospel. It is no longer believed that this is, at the same time, the most effective way to improve society. But the aim is to save society through reforms and legislation of various kinds. Professor George Albert Coe, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, says on this point:

> The modern foreign missionary movement started out as an effort to rescue individuals from sin by preaching. It is now transforming itself into co-operation with the socially constructive forces of the peoples to the end that the level of the whole civilization may be raised. Educative processes that form the social standards are becoming basal in missionary strategy.[19]

Another writer in *Religious Education* says: "When one faces the matter squarely, the problem of foreign missions is the same at heart as that which is before the churches at home. We are at the big business of constructing a Christian social order."[20]

A Unitarian reporter at the annual meeting of the Religious Education Association, of 1919, held in Detroit, points out that the new view of missions was defended in this gathering. He says: "It would surprise many of our [Unitarian] household of faith to hear the missionary work in our [evangelical] sister churches interpreted in

---

[18] The same, July, 1919, p. 422.

[19] *Religious Education,* October, 1916, p. 381.

[20] The same, April, 1920, p. 91.

terms of world friendship, world relationship and world service. Yet that is exactly the point of view taken in the Missionary Education Movement," as set forth by its representatives at this meeting.[21] A writer who was formerly connected with a Christian college in China says:

> The church of today is increasingly emphasizing that part of its message which has to do with transforming this world into the Kingdom of God. Christians are today attacking sin by trying to abolish poverty, ignorance and disease. Pursuant to this conception missionaries are emphasizing in China, education, medical work, famine relief, and help for the unfortunate members of society. In all this they meet with a hearty response, for the Confucian school that has so dominated Chinese thought through the ages directs its energies largely toward making human society ideal. — *The social message of Christianity is strikingly in accord with the best of Chinese tradition.*[22]

All unbiased students will admit that religious liberalism is more nearly akin to Confucianism than to New Testament Christianity.

Another object included in the modern view of missions is stated by Gerald Birney Smith: "One of the supreme tasks of the church [both in the West and East] in a democratic age is to make universally accessible the historical interpretation of the Bible"[23] i. e. the liberalistic religious views. In other words, the defenders of modernism consider it the church's business to spread the new theology. Nothing is more natural than this. You could not expect a liberalistic church to propagate the evangelical faith, could you? Now the greatest impediment in the way of such liberalistic endeavor is old fashioned New Testament Christianity. As for heathenism it de-

---

[21] *The Christian Register,* March 27, 1919, p. 10.
[22] *The Biblical World,* June, 1917, p. 335. Italics mine.
[23] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1917, p. 347.

cidedly has liberalistic tendencies. It is an undeniable fact, as has been intimated, that the most fundamental doctrine of modern religious liberalism—the doctrine of divine immanence—is of heathen origin.

The essential liberalism of the most prominent heathen religions is evident from the religious eclecticism of their adherents. Not only have they, as a rule, a great variety of gods from which to select those whose supposed pretensions appeal to them, but the practice of countless numbers of heathen proves that they have no difficulty to profess various religious faiths, for example Buddhism and Confucianism, at the same time. Heathen people, as a rule, have no objection against accepting the Christians' God as one among many. What they object to is the exclusiveness of Christianity. Innate liberalism revolts at the thought that all other gods must be rejected and that there is only one way of salvation. Heathenism is essentially liberalistic though it does not go to all the length of radical modernism which explains away religion by reducing it to a psychological formula.

It may be worth while, in this connection, to inquire into the causes for the difficulties which liberal churches find to persuade those of liberalistic views to identify themselves with a liberal church. Children who have been brought up under liberalistic influences are difficult to win for the liberalistic church of their elders. The Unitarian church membership recruits itself largely, in some sections almost wholly, from the ranks of evangelical churches, that is to say from those who had been won for Christianity through evangelical influences but have made shipwreck of faith. The cause for this interesting fact is incidentally given by Professor Edward Caldwell Moore, as follows: "The true course is apparently to have religion

and then to liberalize it. It is seemingly futile to have liberalism and then seek to inject religion into it."[24] In other words: If you desire that young people embrace religion, do not preach to them liberalism, for if they become liberalistic in thought, you will find it difficult to arouse in them a real religious interest. But after they have become religious, you may liberalize them and still hope that they will remain religious and be willing to take upon themselves the duties of membership in a church.

Professor Douglas C. Macintosh, of Yale University, says similarly, liberalism "is much more efficient in conserving the faith of modern-minded men who are already Christian" than in leading non-Christians to regard Christianity as even probably true.[25] This is an acknowledgment of the fact that persons brought up in liberalistic circles are admittedly not easy to win for a liberal church. Though such young people are liberalists, they evidently fail to see sufficient reason for the existence of the liberalistic church. Also, of the small number of students in Unitarian theological seminaries only a minority is of Unitarian parentage. Now since "it is seemingly futile to have liberalism and then seek to inject religion into it," it follows that the matter of liberalizing those who have embraced evangelical Christianity — having become members of evangelical churches — is a question of life and death to liberalistic churches. "It is our mission," said a speaker in a session of the American Unitarian Association, "to instruct, enlighten [i. e., liberalize] and harmonize the churches of Christendom." All this goes far to explain the missionary practice of modern liberalism.

---

[24] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1912, p. 10.

[25] The same, 1915, p. 306.

Its efforts are spent in the attempt to win evangelical Christians in the home land as well as in the heathen countries for modernism. The Unitarians furnish a good illustration to the point. While they have established "relations" and fellowship with pagan religionists, they carry on a great work to spread liberalism in the home land.

Nowhere, apparently, has the attempt to liberalize evangelical churches been more successful than in Japan. It has been known for some time that the young Christian church of Japan has to considerable extent fallen prey to the systematic modernizing endeavors made by Unitarians and other liberals. The official representative of the Unitarians in Japan has recently made the assertion that Japanese Christians in "orthodox" mission churches are now as a class thoroughly liberalized.[26] "As early as 1890 the magazine *The Unitarian* was started in Japan, and another, the *Shinri* (Truth) as an organ for propagating the higher criticism. This movement shook the Japanese Church to its foundations. For at the same time a movement took place within the Church in the same direction, questioning the inspiration of the Bible and asking for a revision of the Creed. Some doubted various fundamental doctrines. As a result, faith became colder from that time onwards among Japanese Church members."[27] In China and India also the new theology is working havoc among converts to Christianity.[28] The missionary Robert Gillies, of the China Inland Mission, reports that in China the destructive criticism is making inroads upon the preaching of the

---

[26] *The Christian Register,* May 2, 1918. Compare the article *Christianity in Japan,* in *Religious Digest,* 1919, No. 4.

[27] *Report of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference,* vol. IV, p. 113.

[28] *The Sunday School Times,* June 28, 1919.

missionaries and upon the literature published by missionary publishing houses. This is the consequence of prospective missionaries attending unsafe colleges and seminaries in the home land. Furthermore many of the Christian missions in China send their students to Great Britain and America to be educated and in many instances their faith in the Bible, as taught by faithful missionaries, is undermined. A veteran missionary says: "We pray the Lord of the harvest that He will thrust forth laborers into the harvest, and then we send those laborers to seminaries where they are unfitted, wholly incapacitated, to work in the harvest field."[29] It will probably be remembered that Evangelist J. Wilbur Chapman gave the advice that the churches at home should recall from the mission field all missionaries who did not believe without reserve in the integrity and authority of the Bible.

Rev. Charles Inwood, a Bible teacher and evangelist who has visited many mission fields of the world, reports that, in his opinion, the greatest menace to the efficiency of Christian missions is found in the lack of conviction as to the inspiration of the Bible as the authoritative content of the Christian message. "At home this means the shifting of the basis of the missionary motive from obedience to the command of Christ to a purely humanitarian impulse and purpose. On the mission field it means less study of the Bible as the message of final authority as to the needs of man and God's way of salvation, and more study of man and his environment to discover his personal desires and human possibilities."

At the quadrennial meetings of the Federal Council of Churches, held in Boston, 1920, Dr. Doremus Scudder, of the Congregational Church, formerly a pastor in Japan,

[29] The same, December 26, 1920, p. 715.

after making a plea for the admission of the Unitarian Church to the Federal Council, complained that the evangelical churches of Japan refused to admit the representative of the Unitarian Church, Dr. Clay MacCauley, to their fellowship. "Among the [evangelical] missionaries in Japan," he said further, "there were young modern-minded and modernly trained missionaries, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and others, whose point of view concerning Jesus was practically the same as that of this veteran [Dr. MacCauley]."[30]

Under the title, *Can this be True?* the *Moody Bible Institute Monthly* for November, 1920, has an article giving "opinions expressed at a missionary conference in India recently":

1. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is like the avatars of the Hindus. 2. The resurrection of Jesus Christ and the Virgin birth are not facts. 3. People make a mistake in speaking of the Bible as inspired rather than inspiring. 4. Jesus cannot do all the work of redemption in a lifetime. 5. Isaiah fifty-three is not a prophecy of Christ. The appearance of its being so is largely due to its translation having been made by Christians. 6. We should not refuse to think that Jesus made mistakes in what He said. 7. The idea of a day of judgment is not believed by any sane person.

The Sunday School Times says:

Notwithstanding the steady tendency to unbelief in the cardinal doctrines of the Word on the part of many modern missionaries, yet it will be an encouragement to God's people to know that in all these lands the Lord is raising up a native ministry who know, love and preach the clear message of the Gospel.[32]

Professor William Brenton Greene, Jr., of Princeton Theological Seminary, in a timely article on *The Crises of Christianity,* writes:

Again, the crisis of Christianity appears in this, that while her missionaries are multiplying, their gospel, it would seem, here and

[30] *The Christian Register,* December 9, 1920, p. 3.

[32] October 23, 1920.

there, little by little, is being depleted and emasculated. Such is the warning that has been coming to us from Japan. Such is the warning that is now coming to us from China. Such is the warning that is beginning to come to us from other fields. Could anything be so appalling? We have been wont to look on our Foreign Missions as the demonstration that the church is obeying her Lord's last and great commission to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation." But what if the gospel which *some* missionaries preach is another gospel which is not a gospel? This would prove treason both in the council tent and on the firing line.[33]

The new view of missions is the most insidious foe of evangelical missions. The immediate aim of modernism is the liberalization of Christendom both in the home land and in foreign countries—the undoing of the work of the faithful missionaries of the cross. The ultimate object of liberalistic mission effort is the socialization of the heathen nations through social service, reform and social reconstruction. It is said that social service for the nations of the earth is a worthy endeavor. This cannot be questioned. But when carried on on a liberalistic basis and offered as a substitute for the Christian faith social service has necessarily a pronounced anti-Christian tendency. Furthermore, the attempt to socialize the non-Christian countries has nothing to recommend it to thinking people so long as the endeavors for the socialization of the home lands have failed. Here the proverb is applicable, "Physician heal thyself."

The representatives of the new view of missions have done very little along any line for the heathen nations. They have a way, however, of diverting evangelical mission effort into liberalistic channels. Liberalism, by the confession of some of its own adherents, lacks the true

[33] *The Princeton Theological Review,* 1919, p. 346.

missionary motive. Has it ever been heard of, that people are tithing themselves in order to spread the modern religious liberalism among heathen nations? We trow not. But there are many, many loyal Christian believers who tithe themselves to assist in bringing the precious Gospel of salvation to those who grope in heathen darkness. They have the missionary spirit for the reason that they are convinced to have in the Christian faith the most valuable treasure. They realize that the greatest service to be rendered to others is to spread the faith through which they have found salvation. There are those who give tithes of their income though they themselves are doing without some things that are generally supposed to be needful. Some do not have the means to educate their own children properly. They make sacrifices out of love to their Lord, to bring to the heathen this priceless treasure. Now for religious liberalists to use such money for liberalistic purposes in accordance with the new view of missions, is by all odds the greatest offence of which liberalism is guilty. That such conditions are possible is also a serious blot on the good name of the Christian Church. It is only fair to say that liberalism should not undertake the liberalization and socialization of the world if its own constituency is unwilling to support this work by furnishing the needed means.

XVII

MODERN RELIGIOUS UNIONISM

The leading principle of modern religious unionism has recently been stated by John R. Mott: "It is more necessary to be active than to be orthodox." In other words, *to work* is the great necessity; whether you work for evangelical Christianity, or religious liberalism, is a secondary matter. The slogan of modern unionism is, "Getting together by working together." Says Dean Shailer Mathews:

> Yet whatever form co-operative denominationalism may take, we are learning daily one lesson of democracy: the way to get together is to work together. It is futile to try to standardize theologies in a democratic world. It is even more futile to try to find some theological minimum [a minimum creed] which will be unobjectionable to everybody [as a basis for a working union].[1]

This is a correct and authoritative statement of the modern principle of religious unionism. It demands working together with those to whom even a theological minimum, or a declaration favoring at least a few of the Christian fundamentals, is objectionable. Now it cannot be questioned for a moment that there are certain kinds of work in which evangelical Christians and representatives of liberalism can unitedly engage. If former President Taft, who is a Unitarian, were your neighbor, could you not consistently

[1] *The Independent* (New York), April 17, 1920.

agree to co-operate in making a needed sanitary improvement, or undertaking to persuade a property-holder not to rent his building for immoral purposes? Most assuredly so. But, assuming that you are a believer in the deity of Christ and in salvation through the Blood, you could not, without becoming disloyal to the fundamentals of the faith, engage in evangelistic or other distinctly Christian work with Unitarians. If you, for example, consented to the engagement of a minister, or evangelist, that is acceptable to liberals, you would plainly show that you are not taking your supposed evangelical faith seriously. Even if the liberalists — desiring you to take a stand in favor of unionism — agreed to leave the choice of a Christian worker to you, the fact that you are willing to work with them in such a way would create the impression that you do not regard the differences between your position and that of the liberalists as of fundamental importance. Therefore the very fact that you consented to such union endeavors would be an aid to the liberal cause. Liberalism, having no essential doctrines to stand for, has nothing to lose but can only gain through the modern unionism.

Back of such unionism lies the supposition that the differences between evangelical Christianity and liberal religion are of small consequence and should be obliterated. A union should be effected, it is supposed, not indeed by winning the liberals to the old faith, but, on the contrary, by making the conservatives forget and ignore the differences. To this end the slogan "Getting together by working together" has been adopted. Here the words of the prophet Amos are applicable: "How can two walk together except they be agreed?" How can they who accept the Gospel as the apostles preached it, and the others who uphold a modern substitute for the Gospel, work together in the evangel-

ization of the world? How can the liberals who recognize Buddhists as brethren in the faith and undertake the conversion of believing Christians to liberalism, engage in religious work with evangelical Christians? How can believers in Christ recognize as co-workers in the vineyard of the Lord those who speak of the doctrine of salvation through the Blood as "pestilential teaching?" Is it not a surprising evidence of the shallowness of new theology thought that evangelicals are either supposed to virtually abandon their position, or that it is assumed the two parties which have opposite views concerning the meaning of salvation can labor together for the salvation of men?

In the month of August, 1918, there was held in Cambridge, Mass., at the invitation of Harvard University, a Conference of Theological Schools. The last day of the conference was begun with a communion service in which besides representatives of evangelical churches, Unitarians also participated. The editor of an evangelical church organ, commenting on this "demonstration of Christian unity," says, the nature of the Christian religion, if rightly comprehended, is such that "it does not nullify fellowship" and the Christian faith is never divisive but all-comprehensive. Dr. John Herman Randall writes: "The most hopeful sign today is the new movement toward Christian unity. — Such unity is not the end but only the stepping stone to a still broader religious unity that shall embrace all mankind."[2] This author says further: "What an opportunity is presented today for religion to realize, at last, its true mission in the world and, minimizing all differences, begin to magnify those things common to all religions."[3]

[2] *Humanity at the Cross Roads,* p. 224.

[3] The same, p. 229.

Another liberalistic writer says: "The new interpretation of religion demands that men of all religions forget the things that have divided them in the past, and that stress be placed upon the establishment of a genuine social justice." Professor Roy Wood Sellars has the following to say on the question of religious unionism: "The belief in God must not be a creedal element and atheism must cease to be a term of reproach. The question of the existence of God should not affect the fellowship of members in a church. If emphasis is swung to the humanistic side, the question of God's existence will naturally drop into the list of maybe's. — The essential thing, the positive ground of religious unity, is our loyalty to ideals of character, of social responsibility, of co-operation."[4]

The modern religious liberalism is, it must be conceded, all-comprehensive in design. But modern religion would, clearly, not endeavor or claim to be all-comprehensive, if it did not deny the existence of Satan and of his kingdom. The new theology disowns the Word of God and therefore denies that the prince of this world "now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). True, if Scripture teaching is unacceptable, if there is no kingdom of evil and sin is not what Scripture says it is, then the attitude of liberalism on this point may be correct. On the other hand, if there is a prince of darkness and a kingdom of evil, it is obvious that an all-comprehensive religion would necessarily include them. That liberalistic religion would be only uniting in its character and effect, and not also separating, is therefore its fatal weakness.

Concerning the "Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America" Professor Geo. Cross says: "Doctrinal

---

[4] *The Christian Register,* July 29, 1920, p. 7.

discussions are carefully avoided because, no doubt, of the danger of a growth of divisive influences. Nevertheless the doctrinal implications of its position must be squarely faced sooner or later."[5] Dr. Charles S. Macfarland, the General Secretary of the Federal Council, writes: "I am willing to talk with men upon almost any other subject but that of Christian unity. The important thing is to get them together *to show them the common social task.*"[6] Proceeding from this principle, the constituent bodies of the Federal Council have united on a social creed instead of a religious one. We may, of course, be told that social service is the fruit of Christianity. The fact, however, is that the social creed of the Federal Council is not distinctively Christian in character. Any normal man, be he Christian, Jew, Mohammedan, or heathen, will admit that the reforms demanded in the said "creed" are desirable. The social creed of the Federal Council would make a praiseworthy platform for a political party; it is quite inadequate as a creed or working scheme for a federation of churches. Premier Lloyd George, of England, has lately said wise words on this question:

> The task of the churches is greater than that which comes within the compass of any political party. Political parties may provide the lamps, lay the wires, turn the current on to certain machinery, but the churches must be the power stations. If the generating stations are destroyed, whatever the arrangements and plans of the political parties may be, it will not be long before the light is cut off from the homes of the people. The doctrines taught by the churches are the only security against the triumph of human selfishness, and human selfishness unchecked will destroy any plans, however perfect, that politicians may devise.

In other words, the churches, by faithfully propagating

[5] *The American Journal of Theology*, January, 1919, p. 143.

[6] *Christian Service and the Modern World*, p. 110.

Christian truth, are rendering the greatest possible service to the nation. Professor George R. Dodson has well said:

> The social interests are a very important part of life, and religious people today usually try to promote them. But they neither are nor can be the basis of a church. How to make the world a decent place to live in is not one problem but many, and they cannot be solved together. If men had no other interests, they would not form a church but would create special organizations to produce special results, e. g. associations for tax reforms, city planning, better housing, smoke abatement, pure milk, industrial conciliation, suppression of vice, the mastery of tuberculosis and social diseases etc. Even if the church undertook these tasks, it would fail, and its minister could be nothing more than a superficial sociologist, knowing many things but knowing none of them well, and doing many things but all of them badly. — To give religious names to organizations formed for secular ends conduces neither to clearness of thought nor to any other good.[7]

It is quite possible that a church or a federation of churches may stand for positive religious truth without adopting a written creed; they may have a creed though it be unwritten. Among the constituents of the Federal Council there are those who would not accept a minimum creed expressing adherence to the fundamentals of the Christian faith. It is a significant fact that the Unitarians and other liberals earnestly desire admittance into the Council, on the ground that some of the most radical liberals are within this body. A federation standing loyally to the fundamentals would not attract the Unitarians. The fact remains that unless a federation of religious bodies stands for the fundamentals of the Christian faith and will write them on its banners, it does not sustain a distinctly Christian character. That it may have a social or political creed does not change this fact in the least.

It should be added that the social service wave which

---

[7] *The Christian Register,* October, 24, 1918, p. 11.

struck the modern church not many years since has largely receded. "Social service has been a blessing," says Willard L. Sperry, a representative of liberalism, "but its sources of energy are not as strong as they were; the coal may be getting low. We are liable to develop a cult of busybodies. After all, when those in need are housed and clothed, they still must know what to do with life."[8] And President Arthur Cushman McGiffert has said: "We are plagued in these last days by social service."[9]

In short, modern religious unionism stands for ignoring every fundamental of the Christian faith. This principle was well characterized by Dr. Paul S. Leinbach, an editor of an evangelical denomination who, referring to a work of charity in which he was engaged with representatives of various denominations, including Unitarians, said in a Unitarian convention: The men who undertook this work "forgot the little theological tags which divided them and were united in the spirit of service." The same speaker said "there are in the church too many divisive dogmas which keep apart the friends of truth and high ideals."[10] While it is true that the Unitarians, including those among them who stand for outspoken, bald atheism, claim to labor for high ideals, the fact remains that Christianity and the full-fledged liberalism are, religiously considered, opposites. The modern religious unionism means, in principle, the renunciation of the Christian faith.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon wrote:

> I have taken a deep interest in the struggles of the orthodox brethren; but I have never advised those struggles, nor entertained the slightest hope of their success. My course has been of another

---

[8] The same, July 28, 1920, p. 8.

[9] The same, August 22, 1918, p. 9. Compare p. 143 of the present book.

[10] *The Christian Register*, June 10, 1920.

kind. As soon as I saw, or thought I saw, that error had become firmly established, I did not deliberate, but quitted the body at once. Since then my one counsel has been, "'Come ye out from among them." I have felt that no protest could be equal to that of distinct separation.

XVIII

CHURCH DISCIPLINE VERSUS PERSECUTION

Within recent years a number of books and magazine articles have been published defending the view that the Christian church has not the moral right to exercise discipline for false doctrine. Modern thought in general takes the position that all disciplinary measures on the part of a church, to exclude heresy and maintain the purity of the faith, are an infringement of the principle of religious freedom and liberty of conscience. Discipline on account of false doctrine is held to be persecution, differing only in degree from the dungeon, the rack and the stake. A host of modern writers have asserted that a church that will not bear with religious liberalism in her midst manifests the spirit of persecution that formerly lighted the stake for those who dared to dissent from the creed established by the state.

Not a few liberalistic writers on this subject describe the Christian church as the enemy of religious freedom. Some seem to be of the opinion that there would never have been religious persecution, had not the church been intolerant. It is proper, therefore, to raise the question, how it came about that the church whose head is the pope, girded herself with the sword to overcome the dissenters and to maintain her creed by incarceration and persecution;

and whether there is any ground for the opinion that the teachings of the Christian church, as laid down in the Scriptures, would countenance that sort of thing.

In the first place it is to be noticed that the Christian church endured severe oppression and at times cruel persecution for nearly three hundred years, namely until the time of Emperor Constantine the Great. This emperor embraced the Christian religion and eventually decided to make Christianity the religion of the state. His sons, who succeeded him, began to persecute the dissenters, namely the heathen who desired to adhere to the religion of their fathers, and the Christians who protested against state-churchism. For this new departure there was absolutely no scriptural ground, no more than for the practice of prayer to the holy virgin, or for the doctrine of salvation by works, or for the various other unscriptural doctrines and practices that were gradually introduced in the established church. There was in this period a radical change which amounted, practically, to a partial repudiation of Scripture authority. The leading church became paganized to a large extent. The degenerated state church represented a strange amalgamation of paganism with Christianity. Originally the church, having the mind of Christ and following God's Word alone, had kept itself in consistency with Christian principles; the church of Christ had manifested the nature of a lamb. Now the lamb lost, as it were, its innate characteristics; it developed the teeth and claws of a beast of prey.

12075

But there were, as already intimated, Christian dissenters who endured persecution rather than to identify themselves with the new state church. In certain periods the protesting dissenters were comparatively strong. Then came the great Reformation of the sixteenth century. The

leading reformers believed a union of church and state to be unscriptural, but yet they finally consented to it — a glaring inconsistency. Even in New England, Protestant churches were established that were in effect state churches, persecuting those who differed from the established creed. Today Protestantism is practically a unit in the advocacy of religious freedom.

The denial of freedom of conscience is contrary to the principles, precepts, and spirit of New Testament Christianity. The New Testament Scriptures clearly forbid persecution in any form, but expressly demand church discipline for those who err in doctrine or practice. Our Lord has ordained that if a man "hear not the church," he should be excluded (Matt. 18:17). And Paul says: "A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject." (Tit. 3:10). Again Christ has commanded His followers to "resist not evil" (Matt. 5:39) namely, as the context indicates, not with the sword of iron. In the parable of the tares among the wheat, where the field represents the world — not the church — as is expressly stated (verse 38), the servants are bidden to "let both grow together until the harvest....lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." (Matt. 13: 29, 30). This is clearly a warning against the attempt to bring about a regeneration of society or of the world by the use of force; it is a warning against persecution.

The new theology defends the opinion that the principle of religious freedom and liberty of conscience does not permit of church discipline on account of false teaching. Obviously this view is an indication of the shallowness and superficiality of the modern mind. In effect the modern position means that the dismissal of a liberalistic minister, or professor in a church institution, is contrary to the prin-

ciple of liberty of conscience. The modern view of religious freedom is, obviously, the very opposite of the view defended by the early champions of the cause of freedom The early defenders of religious liberty held that liberty of conscience means that no one should be compelled to make a profession of faith or to unite with a church. And if a member or minister of a church decided to withdraw, he should have the right to do so. The modern view that the principle of religious freedom gives an unorthodox religious teacher the right to fill a position in an orthodox church would have appeared stupid to the early defenders of freedom. They were not under the spell of modern thought and hence must have realized that a truly orthodox church is necessarily burdened in conscience to entrust the important office of a preacher or teacher to a religious liberalist. An orthodox church cannot with a good conscience tolerate that sort of thing. Therefore the principle of liberty of conscience must give a religious body the right to ask for the withdrawal of those that do not accept its doctrines and principles, just as it gives the individual the right to withdraw of his own free will.

Modernism, it is worthy of notice, seems to have developed a type of conscience that differs radically from the Christian conscience of the old heroes of the faith. In our day liberalistic theologians that have discarded the Bible faith think, as a rule, that to ask them to resign their office in an orthodox church is to oppress their conscience and to persecute them. When a number of years ago a minister in a prominent denomination offended his church by his new theology views, the opinion was publicly expressed that to ask him to resign his paying position would be a mild form of persecution, since he could probably not earn as much in another profession. On the other hand the

mighty men of faith who defended the principle of religious freedom did not find it in their conscience to remain in a church from which they differed in faith; they withdrew, though to do so may have meant for them the most cruel persecution.

It is refreshing to notice that there are a few representatives of modern liberalism who do not accept the opinion that the principle of liberty of conscience gives a liberalistic minister the right to retain his position in an orthodox church. The minister of the First Unitarian Church in Cambridge, Mass., says:

> I see no reason for complaints [because of the exclusion of liberalists from evangelical churches]. An organization for the promulgation of doctrines in which I do not believe is one to which I do not wish to belong. If the organization should give me to understand that the assent to its creed which it asks of me is only nominal, this confession of unreality would only deepen my determination not to belong to it.[1]

Without doubt this writer recognizes the fact that Unitarians do not for a moment suppose that it would be inconsistent with the principle of religious liberty to ask the resignation of an orthodox minister or professor in the Unitarian Church. If a secret order may consistently expel a member that fails to stand for its principles, why should it be inconsistent for the church to take similar action?

The modern view of religious freedom is, in its final essence, merely camouflaged doctrinal indifference. The liberalistic mind has largely accepted the opinion that there is no absolute religious truth, that doctrine is quite a secondary matter, and that it should therefore not matter to an evangelical church if a liberalistic person is holding office. The thought, however, that the principle of religious

[1] *The Arbitrator,* January, 1919, p. 12.

freedom requires such an attitude of indifference cannot be taken seriously, no more than the modern idea that the early Protestant leaders who condemned religious oppression and persecution, did so from motives of indifference to doctrine. This view regarding the early Protestants is in fact an historical untruth that is a reflection on the intelligence of those who accept it. If the reformers had not believed that Christian doctrine is of the greatest importance, might they not have remained in the state church in which they were born and held office? Was it not possible for them in that church to lead a devoted life and even to deviate from the established creed, provided they did not publish or profess their convictions? Would they, or their followers, have suffered persecution and death for the sake of doctrine, if they had the modern views of indifference as to Christian doctrine? Has it ever been heard of that a liberalist, who is neutral or indifferent in the matter of faith and doctrine, endured persecution for his religious faith? Will a man die for his faith when his faith consists of negations and when he accepts the opinion that there is no absolute religious truth and that theology is nothing beyond method? Is it not incredible that religious liberalism will make martyrs?

Modern liberalism boasts of the advocacy of religious freedom. We are told that modernism has never oppressed or persecuted those who are of different persuasion. There is abundant evidence that this claim is not well taken. The countries whose governments have fallen prey to religious liberalism have suffered a curtailment of religious freedom. The government of France, for example, is so thoroughly modernist as to be anti-religious. Today a church or religious society has less legal right in France than any secular society or corporation; religious societies have been de-

prived of the right to own real estate property. Says the late Professor G. Santayana of Harvard University:

> Liberalism has been supposed to advocate liberty, but what the advanced parties that still call themselves liberal now advocate is control, control over property, trade, wages, hours of work, meat and drink, amusements, and in a truly advanced country like France control over education and religion; and it is only on the subject of marriage (if we ignore eugenics) that liberalism is growing more and more liberal.[2]

Professor Santayana is right. In France the liberalistic government has to some extent succeeded in gaining control of religion. As liberalism is increasing in other countries it is working toward the same end. More and more voices are heard that favor a union of liberalized religion with the state. This will mean persecution for the dissenters, as may be further shown elsewhere.

---

[2] *Winds of Doctrine*, p. 4.

XIX

HISTORICAL FALSEHOODS—CONTRASTS BETWEEN FREEDOM AND ANARCHY

When George Burman Foster, because of his advocacy of modern liberalism, was excluded from the Chicago Association of Baptist Ministers, he advanced the claim that he was "the most truly Baptist of them all."[1] A writer in a Unitarian periodical thinks, the Unitarians, since they do not require any doctrinal tests whatever, are "the real successors of Roger Williams," the founder of the Baptist Church in America. The same writer thinks, the Unitarians "are perhaps the only people who are Baptists in Roger Williams' estimate."[2] The editor of a Unitarian journal is of the opinion that "thorough adherence to the fundamental Baptist position" assures "sympathy with liberal theology."[3] The view has often been expressed that the true Protestant position demands the toleration of religious liberalism in an evangelical church. A Baptist writer says:

> Has the Baptist denomination with its splendid tradition of religious liberty not room for those who exercise their liberty in adopting.....modern interpretations of the old gospel? Surely it

---

[1] *The Christian Register,* March 6, 1919, p. 7.

[2] The same, May 2, 1918, p. 7.

[3] The same, May 2, 1918.

cannot be that the denominational heirs of Roger Williams intend to drive out those who are Roger Williams' spiritual heirs.[4]

In a similar way it is often asserted that the true Congregationalists, the true Lutherans, etc., are the representatives of the new theology. We have singled out the Baptists for an example, since liberal tendencies are most frequently ascribed to them. Similar assertions are also made concerning other denominations and about Protestantism in general. Professor Geo. Cross, of Rochester Theological Seminary, for example, identifying Protestantism with liberalism, says: "Protestantism denies that the natural and the supernatural are separate. It finds the supernatural within the natural and the divine within the human."[5] Auguste Sabatier, the well-known liberal French theological leader, wrote: "With Luther and Calvin the Christian conscience was definitely recognized as autonomous. It can never again retrace its steps nor again take on the yoke. The idea of setting up in Protestantism an external infallible authority [e. g., recognizing the Scriptures as God's inerrant Word] is only a survival of the principle which was defeated in the sixteenth century."[6] Similar views regarding Luther and Calvin have often been expressed by liberalistic writers.

But on what ground are such assertions made? Every student of church history ought to know that the leading reformers of the sixteeenth century advocated the principle that Scripture, not conscience, is the final authority, and that a conscience that is not tuned to Scripture teaching is an erring conscience. The idea that conscience is autonomous, — a law unto itself — that it is not to be subject to

---

[4] Quoted in *Word and Way*, 1911, No. 44.

[5] *The American Journal of Theology*, April, 1919, p. 140.

[6] *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit*, p. 252.

God's Word — this idea would have been a very abomination to the reformers. To ignore this outstanding fact and assert the contrary is inexcusable. There is absolutely no evidence for such a view. It is just one among the many perversions of history which liberalism accepts dogmatically on the authority of some liberalistic writers.

It is important to remember that our question is not whether there are in our day churches of the Lutheran, Presbyterian, Baptist, etc., denominations which are liberalistic in doctrine. It is only too well known that this is the case. The point in question is, was there originally in the doctrines and principles of these churches any ground for the claim that they cannot consistently be identified with the old theology to the exclusion of liberalism. Are these churches, in so far as they refuse to countenance the new theology, true Congregational, Disciple, etc., churches, or have they fallen from their first estate? Is there, historically considered, any ground for the opinion that true evangelical Christians take a liberalistic view of the nature of Christian doctrine and can therefore not have any doctrinal tests or, in other words, that liberalism is an innate characteristic of Protestantism?

Concerning no other evangelical church, probably, has the claim of innate liberalism been so frequently repeated and so largely accepted as about the Baptists. It is for this reason that we take them here for an example. Many writers, both within and without the Baptist Church, have said that Baptists have no binding creed; they do not stand for anything doctrinally; they have a right to reject any doctrine, every Baptist Church is a law unto itself in matters of faith and practice. If this were a correct statement of fact there could be no question but that Baptists are essentially liberalistic in faith.

But there are Baptist churches — great numbers of them — which take the position that to deny the Christian fundamentals is to repudiate the Baptist faith. In other words, there are Baptists who have a creed, be it written or unwritten, that is held to be binding. This fact has been overlooked by those who have asserted that "heresy trials" are made impossible by the supposed Baptist position as to creed. Though there are liberalistic Baptist churches which do not hold to anything doctrinally, the supposition that they constitute the whole of the Baptist denomination can find acceptance only with them that are unacquainted with the facts.

A thorough search of early Congregational and Baptist literature, including their confessions, establishes the fact beyond the possibility of a doubt that there is no room whatever for the view that they were liberalistically inclined, or had no doctrinal tests. It is difficult to see that a church could be more free from theological liberalism than were the early evangelical dissenters. The British state church of a few centuries ago would not have admitted that it was theologically liberalistic in any respect. Considered from the view point of these dissenters, however, the union of church and state, which was upheld by the state church, was in effect liberalistic. It meant that the Scriptures are not the only authority in matters religious. The Mennonites, Baptists and other dissenters saw clearly — and every evangelical Christian will agree with them today — that there is absolutely no Scripture warrant for a union of a Christian church with the state. They realized that a church which consents to a union with the state, does not follow the voice of Scripture but of self-interest on the part of kings and potentates and ecclesiastical leaders. The scriptural way to plant and maintain the faith and to kindle the love of God

in the hearts of men is quite different from the way of state-churchism. State-churchism is not founded on Scripture, hence its acceptance means the rejection of the principle of the sole authority of Scripture; and therefore it, in principle, means to that extent theological liberalism. The leading principle of liberalism is the setting aside of Scripture as the authority for the faith and practice of the church.

The fact that the early Baptists published a number of confessions at various times has been supposed to indicate that they had no binding creed, since former confessions were superseded by newer ones. But a comparison of these confessions shows that they are statements of one and the same creed. Need it be said that neither the Baptists nor any other body of reasonable Christian confessors were ever of the opinion that a written statement which they might give of their faith was beyond the possibility of improvement? The Baptists stood for definite doctrines and principles and those who did not accept their creed were refused the right of membership, in other words, they had an authoritative creed like all other evangelical denominations. One of their articles of faith was the inspiration of the Scriptures. They recognized the Scriptures as infallible, verbally inspired; they said of the Bible that "God is the author thereof (in the sense that He inspired it) therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God," as is stated in the Baptist Confession of 1677. Now the acceptance of the inspiration of Scripture is in itself a creed of tremendous importance. It would be folly to say that a church which accepts the supernatural divine revelation in Scripture has no binding creed or is "a law unto itself" in doctrinal questions. When consistently accepted the doctrine of inspiration excludes theological liberalism.

Again the opinion has often been expressed that Bap-

tists, since they have always advocated liberty of conscience, should within their churches grant all liberty to deviate in doctrinal matters from the accepted standards. Only recently, when a Unitarian minister occupied the pulpit of a Baptist church in a New England city, the local Baptist Ministers' Association, though affirming their own orthodoxy, declared themselves in favor of granting such liberties. Their decision on this question they expressed in the following statement:

> Resolved that we believe in freedom of thought and religious practices. For centuries Baptists have been passionate advocates of religious democracy in its purest forms. While we cherish our own personal convictions unflinchingly, we concede to those who differ from us the ancient Baptist privilege of private judgment and free speech [even in our churches]. As Baptists we believe in religious freedom.

So they supposed themselves justified to open their pulpits to Unitarian preachers. "To Unitarians this is peculiarly gratifying," says a Unitarian editor, "for our central principle is that same unfaltering faith in the right of private judgment and spiritual freedom."[7]

The reader will notice that the Ministers' Association which gave out this declaration failed to make clear the point, what religious freedom, or liberty of conscience, has to do with the question of admitting Unitarian ministers to evangelical pulpits. A number of questions are here pertinent. In the first place it should be noticed that the said Baptist ministers assert their own orthodoxy. Could it be, then, that they are of the opinion that, by refusing Baptist pulpits to Unitarian ministers, the evangelical Baptists would forego the privileges of religious freedom and liberty of conscience? Could not these privileges be exercised with-

---

[7] *The Christian Register,* May 2, 1918.

out permitting those who deny the deity of our Lord to speak in evangelical churches? Or could it be that the Unitarian ministers do not enjoy religious freedom unless they are admitted to evangelical pulpits? Since the Constitution of the United States of America guarantees religious freedom to every man, Unitarians and freethinkers not excluded, are the evangelical churches violating the Constitution of our land when they deny them their pulpits? We know, by way of illustration, of a person — not a Unitarian — who claimed the right to preach in all churches of a certain town; his claim was not based on the principle of religious freedom, however, but on a supposed special call. Could it be that the Unitarian ministers' conscience is so constituted that it cannot exercise its God-given liberty, if they are refused the privilege to occupy evangelical pulpits?

And what about Unitarians permitting orthodox evangelical preachers to occupy any of their pulpits? Will they permit faithful messengers of the old gospel to preach in their churches? Do they believe that religious freedom demands this sort of thing of them? Certainly not. This is what John Haynes Holmes has to say on this point: "Even those radical churches which have freed themselves of all theological bonds have gone to the other extreme of setting up a structure of denial which is just as exclusive as any of the creeds of Christendom."[8] Dr. Holmes is right. In fact, Unitarians are more positive in their denials than some nominally evangelical churches are in their affirmations. There is plenty of evidence of a deep-seated aversion on the part of Unitarians against orthodox preaching, but they obviously agree with liberalistic Baptists in the opinion that

---

[8] *Unity*, May 22, 1919, p. 140.

the exercise of religious freedom involves the admission of Unitarians to evangelical pulpits.

The question remains, what has the refusal to admit Unitarian ministers to evangelical pulpits to do with religious freedom and with Roger Williams' position on this point? In what respect is it a violation of this principle? Some of the eminent theologians tell us there is such a violation involved but they have utterly failed to make this point clear. How is it to be explained, we may further ask, that people who boast of being in the habit of doing their own thinking, as liberals often do, accept the opinion that a church which takes a definite stand doctrinally is violating the principle of religious freedom?

We have, by way of illustration, spoken here more particularly of the Baptists, but all other evangelical churches originally occupied essentially the same ground as the Baptists, on such fundamental doctrines as the trinity of God, the deity of Christ, the Atonement, the inspiration of the Scriptures, etc., and as regards the proper attitude toward those who disown these truths. The early Methodists, for example, considered these doctrines as essential, in other words, they had a binding creed including these points of doctrine. This is evident from various statements made by John Wesley. He wrote, for example, to a prominent Unitarian:

> Take away the scriptural doctrine of redemption, or justification, and that of the new birth, the beginning of sanctification, or, which amounts to the same thing, explain them as you do, suitably to your doctrine of original sin; and what is Christianity better than heathenism? Wherein (save in rectifying some of your notions) has the religion of St. Paul any pre-eminence over that of Socrates or Epictetus? Either I or you mistake the whole of Christianity from the beginning to the end. Either my scheme or yours is as contrary to the scriptural as the Koran is. Is it

mine or yours? Yours has gone through all England, and made numerous converts. I attack it from end to end; let all England judge whether it can be defended or not.[9]

The right of a body of Christian believers to stand for certain doctrinal convictions, and consequently to uphold a doctrinal norm for those who would identify themselves with them, or would speak in their churches, cannot be questioned. It is impossible to take seriously the opinion that the principle of religious freedom precludes that sort of thing. As for the early evangelical churches, they would have taken it as an insult had they been accused by their contemporaries of holding the opinions on "religious democracy" with which they are credited by teachers in some of our modern theological seminaries. Again it is true that the leaders in the Reformation of the sixteenth century believed in the right of private judgment and private interpretation in the sense that neither pope, king, nor hangman, neither ecclesiastical nor civil authorities, had the right to enforce their religious decisions upon any believer or body of believers who had obtained more light from Scripture or who for any reason differed from the dominant church. The assertion, however, that the right of private judgment meant, in the opinion of the Reformers, that the ministers or members of their churches had the right to teach that which is clearly at variance with God's Word, or that it meant the right to deny the inspiration and authority of Scripture, this opinion is altogether unfounded. Neither Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, nor the evangelical dissenters, confounded religious freedom with religious anarchy, after the manner of modern liberalism.

Various liberalistic writers have said, it is impossible to

---

[9] Faulkner, *Wesley as Sociologist, Theologian, Churchman,* p. 40.

determine just what the Bible teaches; it would require an infallible person to interpret the Bible, therefore no individual or church has the right to say that their interpretation of the Bible is correct. To the thinking of many this is a profound argument. Is it true, however, that no one can tell what the Bible teaches? Do not Bible students in general agree that the Scriptures teach the fundamental doctrines of the evangelical churches? Do not, as a rule, even liberalists admit this? The denial of the fundamentals on the part of liberalism has its cause in the rejection of the authority of Scripture. The opinion that the Scriptures do not plainly teach the fundamentals must be ascribed to ignorance.

Again, when you speak of fundamentals, it is needful to let people know what you mean; it is necessary to define yourself. Dean J. F. Vichert, of Colgate Theological Seminary, by way of illustration, in his booklet *Concerning Fundamentals,* states that those who, in his view, take "a reactionary attitude" — the conservatives — are too exacting in their insistence on definitions. He says: "Certain doctrines are [by conservatives] defined and declared fundamental. These are to be the test of a man's fidelity to truth, of his orthodoxy and denominational standing." Clearly, however, a doctrine, to be worthy of the name, must be stated or defined. And if a church holds certain doctrines to be fundamental, they ought to be made the test of a man's orthodoxy and denominational standing. Dr. Vichert thinks, "this proceeding implies a monopoly of truth on the part of those who propose it." He adds: "One wonders whence the infallibility came which qualifies any group of men for such an undertaking. A moment's reflection makes clear that it is but the claim and practice of the Roman church over again. To be sure, the

fagot and the stake are missing," etc. Yet in the same pamphlet this author expresses the opinion that men who deny certain teachings which he considers of fundamental importance should be relieved of positions of trust and leadership which they may hold.

Dr. Vichert defends "the right and competency of the individual to transact for himself in matters of religion," in other words, the right of liberty of conscience. Now the fact deserves notice that this is precisely the plea advanced by the said liberalistic leaders who, in our author's view, ought to be relieved of their positions. Indeed this right must not be questioned or denied to any person. To relieve an unsound teacher of his position, or to exclude him from the church, is not to infringe upon his rights of religious liberty. To exclude a man who does not stand for the doctrine of the church does not constitute an infringement of this sort. On the other hand, to demand that such a person should be retained, clearly involves an infringement upon the rights of religious liberty as concerns the church. The church, as well as the individual, must have the right to stand for something definite in matters of religion. To take such a position in no wise involves a claim of infallibility for the individual or for the church. It does not require the predicate of infallibility to have convictions as to the fundamentals taught in God's Word. A church which has no such convictions to stand for is a sorry figure indeed.

The cause of modern liberalism has been advanced in no small degree through perversions of history — historical falsehoods. We are asked to believe, as we have seen, that Protestantism is, essentially, liberalism; that the early dissenter churches had no authoritative creeds; that Roger Williams was one of the distinguished fathers of modern

liberalism. And these are but a few among the many perversions of history on which the modern mind has been fed. Modern thought is quite credulous toward anything that favors modernism; too often it uncritically accepts "things that ain't so."

There are liberalistic churches which claim they have no binding or authoritative creed nor any doctrinal test, and yet they, to all appearance, shrink from the unavoidable consequences of such a position. The most conspicuous example, probably, of a church which not only in theory but in real practice follows the principle of "no doctrinal tests," is the Community Church organized by John Haynes Holmes, of New York. Of this church it may be truthfully said that it has no binding creed. It is Dr. Holmes' boast that Jews and Buddhists are members of it. Dr. Holmes and probably the majority of his congregation were formerly Unitarians. A writer in a Unitarian journal regrets their withdrawal from that church and points out that a Unitarian church also has the privilege of receiving into membership those of non-Christian faith. It must be assumed, however, that the members of the Community Church recognize the leadership of Jesus in a similar sense as the atheistic socialists accept it. Now we are told that they who take a position such as the Community Church —standing, in plain English, for religious anarchy — are "Roger Williams' spiritual heirs" and they only have the right to the evangelical name.

The opinion that a church of any one of the evangelical denominations which has a binding creed or a doctrinal test, is deviating from the position of the early church fathers, is an historical perversion which is unworthy of well-informed people. The contrary is true. The early fathers of all evangelical churches, Congregationalists, Baptists, and

Methodists included, would have considered it absurd that a church which does not stand for Christian doctrine and has no doctrinal tests should lay claim to the Christian name. In this connection it may be repeated for emphasis that a body of believers may not have a written creed and yet stand faithfully for the doctrines of the Christian faith. The Young Men's Christian Association, for example, though it never had a written creed, was originally a mighty force for evangelical Christianity. Professor Edward Caldwell Moore says: "Membership was conditioned not merely upon moral character and sympathy with the aims of the Association but also upon the acceptance of the doctrines of evangelical denominations. The Association thus reflected in its very origin the reaction against liberalism."[10]

The principle of religious freedom and liberty of conscience, for which some of the early dissenters so earnestly contended, means that, as a citizen of the state, every man has a right to believe and teach any morally unobjectionable religious doctrine. You may be fully convinced that your neighbor who may be an unbeliever, is erring religiously, yet the state has no right to take him to account for his error. But this principle does not mean that a man who does not accept the creed for which the church stands, has a right to claim membership in the church. The state has its laws to which the citizens must conform and those who break the laws are temporarily separated by confinement in prisons. The church also has its creed and principles by which it is maintained and those who do not abide by them must be excluded. The principle that every citizen of a given state should make his own laws, or, in other words, be a law unto himself, and that the state has no right to

---

[10] *The Spread of Christianity in the Modern World*, p. 99.

impose its laws upon the citizens — this is the principle of anarchy. Just so the assertion that the church should have no creed, that she should not stand for anything definite as concerns matters doctrinal and religious — that every member should follow his own autonomous conscience — this is the principle of *religious* anarchy. A people which does not recognize the right of the commonwealth to make binding laws, could not be recognized as a state. Neither is a group of persons who refuse to stand for anything definite religiously and doctrinally, a Christian church.

The modern notion that religiously there should be no recognized standard or authority and that a consistent believer in religious freedom "don't obey no orders unless they is his own," is curious indeed. A supposed freedom that is not willing to bow to law is not of divine but of diabolic origin. A supposed free church that has nothing to stand for, besides such matters as social improvement, is a church in name only. It is quite possible to build a church of that type, made up of people of contradictory interpretations of life and of contrary programs of religious action — in other words, a church composed of liberal and orthodox — it is possible to organize such a church, provided the orthodox do not take their faith seriously. The question is not one of possibility, however, but of principle. It is not enough that the church be free — freedom may be "not according to knowledge" — she must have a purpose — a creed. The editor of a liberal journal has these significant words to say on the point in question:

> The gist of the matter is that Unitarians make their freedom a principle of dissolution when they say that this freedom principle takes the duty out of a church attendance. *With a good many of us liberalism is organized disunion, religious anarchy, a bit of bad thinking applied to religion.*[11]

[11] *The Christian Register*, February 7, 1918, p. 9.

XX

IMMORTALITY

Modern science has undertaken to explain the soul as a mere "stream of thought," to use the expression of one of America's eminent philosophers, the late Professor William James, of Harvard University, who defended this view. Human personality in any real sense is denied. If this view be correct man cannot be immortal in any true sense. If there be no soul it would be folly to speak of its immortality.

Radical modern liberalists have not ceased to speak of immortality but they have deprived the word of all real meaning. President G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University, (an eminent representative of the new theology), says: "The only valid immortality is of two kinds, influential and eugenic."[1] "The prolonged and rich life of posterity here," he says further, "is the only real fulfillment of the hope of immortality."[2] Professor Coe of the Union Theological Seminary thinks devotion to the cause of social regeneration "may be a factor in a process whereby immortality, in the literal sense of indissoluble fellowship between persons, is being achieved."[3] This is immortality in name only. Walter Rauschenbusch pointed out that the doctrine of transmigra-

---

[1] *Jesus, the Christ, in the Light of Psychology,* vol. I, p. 15.

[2] The same, vol. II, p. 692.

[3] *The Psychology of Religion,* p. 298.

tion of souls, or of re-incarnation, is held by some of the modern theologians. "This theory," he says further, "seems to offer a fair chance for all, provided each soul is really started in the exact environment which it has earned by its past life and in which it can best develop for the future."[4] This is a striking indication of the ascendency of paganism in nominal Christendom.

Modern liberalism has no answer to the question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Therefore the representatives of modern religion, in so far as they do not deny immortality outright, assume an attitude of general indifference on the question of the immortality of the soul. President McGiffert has pointed out that theologians of today are losing interest in the subject of immortality and "many Christians because the life after death lies beyond the range of experimental proof [and they no longer accept the authority of Scripture] have grown indifferent about it."[5] In fact, not a few ministers of the modern gospel have preached from the pulpit that there may be no hereafter. "Men are exhorted to find immortality in advancing the race, only remembered by what they had done," declared *The Continent* not long ago. Professor Henry C. Vedder, of Crozer Theological Seminary, says:

> Most theologians and preachers declare very positively that there is a place called Heaven, where the "saved" will forever be happy in the presence of God. There may be such a place; nobody can prove that there is not. But neither can the preachers prove that there is such a place. There is no adequate ground for their confident assertions. When they tell us that there is a Heaven, and all about its conditions and life, as if they had actually been there and had brought back plans drawn to scale and complete specifica-

[4] *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, p. 231.

[5] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1916, p. 325.

tions, they are just "pushing wind." They know no more about it than you or I know, and that is just nothing at all.[6]

Considered from the viewpoint of modern liberalism which denies the authority of the Scriptures, Professor Vedder is right. Unless God has answered these questions for us in His Word, we must confess to ignorance concerning these things. With faith in the Bible as God's supernatural revelation goes, as a rule, belief in heaven and immortality.

Various defenders of modernism have expressed the opinion that the desire for a future life is essentially selfish. A writer in *The Christian Register* speaks of this desire as "aggravated selfishness."[7] In the view of these writers the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is incompatible with accepted principles of morality. But if the desire for a life beyond the grave be unjustifiable, would not the life that now is fall under like censure? If non-existence be the unselfish thing and there be no hereafter, would not self-destruction become a virtuous deed? It may be worth while to notice, in passing, that the desire for personal salvation has also been interpreted as selfishness.[8]

The contrast between believing that man's existence is confined to the short span of time of his earthly life, and that it extends through an eternity either of bliss or of woe is apparent. Belief in the immortality of the soul is a tremendous factor in shaping a man's life on earth. It matters much to society, said Professor Goldwin Smith, "whether death ends all and conscience is a delusion," for "the churches are a momentous part of our social organization, and on

---

[6] Quoted in *The Baptist Believer,* April, 1920, from *Chester News.*

[7] *The Christian Register,* October 3, 1918, p. 13.

[8] The same, May 29, 1919, p. 13.

these beliefs they rest."[9] Human responsibility to God and belief in divine justice cannot mean much if death ends human existence and there is no judgment to follow. Christianity has been criticized severely by modernists on account of its other-worldliness. But other-worldliness is the natural result of the belief in immortality. Such belief must, as said in a preceding paragraph, have a marked influence on the lives of thinking people. In fact, true religion is necessarily linked with the conviction of immortality. "The *work* of man may center itself in the present world, but unless the *faith* of a man extends beyond humanism, beyond social betterment and art, it is not religious faith at all."

---

[9] *The Independent* (New York), May 18, 1905.

XXI

SCIENCE

It has been said that all science rests on hypotheses or unproved suppositions, therefore theology also might content itself with "workable hypotheses" as its underlying principles. While it is true that much that popularly goes for science is nothing more than supposition, this can by no means be said of all science. Modern science, indeed, works largely with hypotheses and theories. It need not be said that this is in itself entirely unobjectionable. A scientist has the undoubted right to set up a hypothesis. If he succeeds in proving and establishing it, this particular view ceases to be a hypothesis. It is only when scientists teach mere hypotheses as if they were established truths, or when they work with hypotheses that are contrary to Scripture that we must object. The weak point in modern science is that certain unproved theories are treated as and given the appearance of established truths.

It should be added that science in so far as it has to do with practical things, such for example as medicine and surgery, the use of electricity etc., is established on facts, not on mere hypotheses. While it is true that a theory may help a physician in his effort to find effective remedies, the value of a given remedy depends solely on the fact that it brings the desired results. The properties and effects of drugs are known to physicians.

Toward the close of the last century, it may be worth while to notice, a peculiar hypothesis has been set up in regard to medical science in general. In the city of Boston, famed for its culture and learning, a cult has arisen which teaches that sickness exists only in the imagination of people and that remedies have no healing properties, neither does poison destroy. These hypotheses are accepted by people belonging to the most highly educated classes. Here is hoping that if druggists accept such theories, they will abstain from filling prescriptions on the principle that one drug is, in a given case, as good as another and that poison is not harmful.

If a medical "science" which consisted of hypotheses, instead of being based on fact and truth, would be worthless, what about a theology which deals only with hypotheses and does not claim to have absolute truth or fact, but admittedly offers only relative, subjective, imaginary truth? Christianity is an historical religion. It depends for its right to exist on certain historical facts, such as the incarnation of Christ and His work for the salvation of mankind. Deny these truths and you have lost your foundation for the Christian faith.

The most objectionable hypothesis of modern science is the theory of naturalism. This is the assumption that there is nothing beyond nature and material or natural forces. There is, according to this theory, no special divine agency and no miracle. There is no God beyond or above immanent natural law. This theory is radically antagonistic to the Christian faith. Naturalism is in a large measure responsible for the fact that the higher institutions of science have become hotbeds of infidelity. Moncure D. Conway, in his autobiography, points to the failure of modern science, after having weakened the faith in supernatural-

ism, to furnish a sufficient ethical guide. He quotes his friend Goldwin Smith as foreseeing "fatal results to the next generation unless science can construct something to take the place of the failing religious conscience." Is not the hope that science will do anything of this sort futile? Unless men are willing to accept the supernatural revelation of God in Scripture, they will never have an adequate foundation for ethics and religion. To take science, instead of divine revelation, for such a basis is to build on a foundation of sand. Naturalism in morality and in religion is fatal to both. None other than President Arthur Cushman McGiffert has pointed out that science, if taken as a basis for morality, is an utter failure. He says: "Science does not make for democracy but for aristocracy and autocracy." In view of the great differences among men, science would demand that "men's status and fortune shall accurately correspond to their abilities." After elucidating this point further, this author says:

> The ideal of democracy could hardly have arisen in a scientific age. — Science gives us not the ideal of democracy but of the superhuman, the ideal of autocracy and imperialism. — If we want a democracy it is because we are idealists, or because we are religious men, not mere scientists, and if democracy is to prevail, it will be because idealism triumphs over brute fact and religion forces science to do its bidding[1]

The question is here in order, What ground do unbelieving scientists have for their naturalistic theories? Do they have any proof for the supposition that there is no personal God and that all is natural law and chance? For example, a professor of philosophy in the University of Michigan says: "The universe *is*: it is meaningless to ask whence it came, for it always was."[2] This writer argues

---

[1] *Religious Education,* June, 1919, p. 156 ff.

[2] Sellars, *The Next Step in Religion,* p. 218.

that there is no God and that eventually the thought of God "will drop from religion."[3] "If religion is to survive," he says, "it must be human and social."[4] And what is the foundation for such opinions? we must ask How do unbelieving scientists know that the universe is from eternity and that there is no God? The fact is, *they do not know.* Such suppositions as the one of the eternity of the universe are absolutely without evidence or proof, yet they are proclaimed as if they were established facts. No orthodox theologian was ever so dogmatic as the materialistic scientist who alleges that his scientific learning does not permit him to accept the Christian fundamentals; he means merely that they will not fit his own dogma and unfounded hypotheses. Here, then, namely in the field of modern science as taught in many of our institutions of higher education, is dogma forsooth. Modernistic dogma is, as a matter of fact, not based on revelation, as is the Christian dogma; nor has it any other worthy foundation. Its foundation is the notions and predilections of unbelieving men. Therefore naturalistic dogma is not worthy of acceptance by those who do their own thinking.

Science does not furnish any evidence in favor of naturalism. On the other hand, it would be out of the question to suppose that science, without the aid of revelation, could give us adequate information concerning God, His character and man's relationship to Him. It is a popular fallacy that men of science know more about these things than those who have not studied science. It is inexcusable for men of science to undertake the settlement of questions that are beyond their realm, as did, for example, the unbeliever Laplace, when he said, he had searched the heav-

[3] The same, p. 6.
[4] The same, p. 225.

ens with the most powerful instruments and had failed to find God. It is readily seen that this statement, instead of proving the non-existence of God, is only evidence of the well-known truth that learned men sometimes lack wisdom.

Modern naturalistic science should not assume that it can speak authoritatively on the greatest questions, as if it had the means and ways to investigate the great spiritual verities that lie beyond the physical. To accept the dogma of naturalism is therefore thoroughly unscientific. Naturalistic science has made a dogma of a hypothesis for which there is absolutely no proof, and with unheard-of haughtiness it assumes that those who refuse to accept the new dogma are behind the times and have no right to their belief.

In effect, then, we have mainly two dogmatisms facing each other. On the one hand there is the dogma of Christianity which is based on Scripture and confirmed by Christian experience. On the other hand is the dogmatism of what a recent writer calls naive, uncritical naturalism which assumes that it has the last word on the questions of God and human destiny and that the mechanical interpretation of the universe is the sole and absolute truth, overlooking entirely the outstanding fact that the naturalistic theory has no foundation except in the materialistic, anti-Christian spirit of the time.

And yet science, notwithstanding all its materialistic attainments, recognizes today that there are many far inferior questions to which it has no answer. It does not know, e. g., what electricity or gravitation is. "We have a remarkable chemistry of commerce and have rescued a thousand waste products," says Professor J. A. W. Haas. "We have created an apparently new physical chemistry which

rests on mathematical exactitude. But have we pried any more deeply into the secrets of atoms, or electrons, or ions, or corpuscles? Can we answer the ultimate question of chemical research?" A writer in *The Hibbert Journal* thinks, the time will come "when the average man has learned, as well as the philosopher knows now, that all our science and positive information has not brought us one whit nearer intrinsic acquaintance with the fundamental conditions of existence."[5] Herbert Spencer, in one of his later books, wrote: "Could we penetrate the mysteries of existence, there would remain still greater mysteries." President William L. Bryan, of Indiana University, says: "You have the scholar's secret that the learning of the university is not perfect, is never perfect, is always changing in small or great."[6]

A popular magazine writer, Dr. Frank Crane, has called attention to the fact that true progress must mean more than the use of modern inventions. He says:

> There is no human value in mechanism. — We are living in the full blaze of the era of invention. Our typeman is Thomas Edison, working away at a phonograph and ridiculing the idea of a man having a soul and of life after death. Yet I doubt if an absolute perfection of invention and machinery would be of any real help to men. That I can own a clock, wind it up, and tell time by it, does nothing appreciable to me. I am no more of a man than if I told the hour by a sun-dial. If I can run a locomotive, or ride in a Pullman, or operate a wireless telegraph apparatus, or guide a steamboat, or use a patent cigar-lighter, what of it?
>
> Nothing really benefits man but such a thing as helps develop (1) his body or (2) his spirit (including his intellectual and emotional life). Whatever makes me sounder, stronger, and healthier physically is good; so also is whatever improves my reasoning fac-

[5] Vol. XII, p. 754.

[6] *The Biblical World*, December, 1914, p. 390.

ulties, deepens my affections, and brings order, peace, and efficiency out of the confusion of my desires. — I cannot see how a stop-watch, a microscope, or a power-loom does either one of these two services. Material progress is not necessarily civilization — in fact, it may go along with thoroughly vile ideas of life. Civilization can be furthered only by such forces as make men stronger in body, more capable in brain, and nobler in heart.

A comparatively new branch of science may deserve to be mentioned here: the psychology of religion. Modern religious psychology deals with religion as a natural phenomenon in human life. It represents the natural or biological view of religion. Religion and religious experience are considered the result of entirely explicable psychical forces. Religion is recognized only as a natural property of man; supernatural religion is ignored. Modern religious psychology would reduce all the varied expression of religion, whether Christian or pagan, to biology, that is to say, to commonly prevalent instincts and impulses. But strange as it may appear, the radical liberalistic psychology of religion denies that there is a distinct religious instinct; it denies that there is a personal God. In other words, it disavows the genuineness of religion. If religion is defined as mere morality, or if morality is given the name of religion, there is no religion left to psychologize about. It would then be appropriate to speak of the psychology of of morality instead of religious psychology.

XXII

EVOLUTIONISM

The Scriptures teach that the world is the result of the creative work of God. God is the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the world. This is denied by modern naturalism. The prevalent type of naturalism is Evolutionism. The theory of evolution offers another explanation for the existence of the material universe. Evolutionism holds that matter existed always, and that the earth with all that exists thereon is the result of the natural process of development. According to the hypothesis of evolution the forces necessary for such development are immanent in matter, in the organisms and in their environment. "The doctrine of evolution may be defined," says Professor E. D. Cope, "as the teaching which holds that creation has been and is accomplished by the agency of the energies which are intrinsic in the evolving matter, and without the interference of agencies which are external to it."[1] Huxley once said: "The doctrine of evolution is directly antagonistic to that of creation. Evolution, if consistently accepted, makes it impossible to believe in the Bible."[2]

Evolutionism, it should be noted, has no answer to the

---

[1] Quoted, *The Reformed Church Review*, 1914, p. 522.

[2] Professor A. S. Zerbe in *The Reformed Church Messenger*, April 24, 1919.

question how mere natural forces could have chanced to produce order as we see it in the universe. We are asked to believe the unbelievable miracle that mere forces which are inherent in matter created accidentally that which could only have been called into existence by an intelligence of the highest order.

It has been supposed that the evolutionary theory could be made acceptable to Christian believers by making Evolution simply the method of divine creation. Various writers have so modified Evolution that it has become quite another thing from the hypothesis that passes by that name and with which the modern world is so familiar. It is true that God could have made use of evolution as the method of creation, but the Bible teaches distinctly that man was not evolved from animal species, that he is not the result of development but of special creation. The advocates of a modified theory of evolution have thought, there need be no fear that Evolution may eliminate God from the world, so long as He, besides the natural forces, may be believed to be back of the supposed development. The fact, however, is only too evident that, in consequence of Evolutionism, God is less and less recognized in the modern intellectual world. Obviously Evolutionism has atheistic tendencies. It has been rightfully said that "the theories of evolution reduce existing things to so small beginnings that the creation of them seems scarcely worthy of the supreme Being."[3] "The modernist's thought of the world process as a mode of spiritual evolution makes no call for a God," says Dr. Charles F. Dole.[4] Professor Herbert Alden Youtz, who accepts the doctrine of Evolution, points out that it has in many instances, even on the field of theology, led to

[3] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1915, p. 556.
[4] *The Christian Register,* February 20, 1919, p. 174.

mechanism, materialism and atheism.[5] Today the world of science scarcely takes God into the account, except in the sense that they speak of the forces of nature as God. Leading evolutionists consider it their business to show that natural forces are sufficient to account for the existence of the universe as it is today.

Professor A. S. Zerbe, of Central Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, describes the religious aspect of Evolution as follows:

> According to the view of evolutionary science man traces his ancestry directly to some high order of animal, as the ape or chimpanzee, but ultimately and originally to a very low order of life, as the amoeba. The method by which scientists reach this conclusion is somewhat circuitous, but it may be stated briefly as follows: Science starts with the pantheistic postulate that the universe had no beginning in time but has always existed, its existence being due, not to a Supreme Being, or God, but to some resident force or energy. — To support this claim all sorts of theories, hypotheses, conjectures and make-shifts are advanced. — Naturally under this view the old Bible doctrine of the existence of a Supreme Being, the Creator of the universe and of man, must be given up, together with practically everything that is distinctive of the Bible and the Christian religion."[6]

William Jennings Bryan says:

> The theory that links man in generations with the ape has paralyzed religious thought and the usefulness of so many of the intellectuals of the world during the last half century. That man bears the image of God and not the likeness of the animals below him, is the foundation stone upon which one must build. The theory advanced by Darwin puts God so far away that man loses the consciousness of His presence in daily life.

Though Evolution is an unproved supposition it has become an integral part of "the modern mind." Hence theologians, in so far as they are willing to take their or-

---

[5] *Democratizing Theology*, p. 14.

[6] *The Reformed Church Messenger*, April 24, 1919.

ders from the crowd, have undertaken to adjust their theology to this popular hypothesis. The representatives of the new theology tell us that the church will fail unless she accepts Evolutionism. The adjustment of theology to the theory of evolution has resulted in theological naturalism. The modern theology is not rooted in Scriptures but in naturalistic theories. Just as secular modern science considers the universe, as it exists today, the result of Evolution, so modern theology believes the Christian religion, as well as all other religions, to be also the product of a natural evolutionary process. The divine revelation in Scripture is denied; it is claimed that in the Scriptures men have simply revealed their own thought about God. There has never been a direct divine intervention in the history of the world, we are told. God did not intervene for revelation, nor for the redemption of man, nor ever in answer to prayer. In fact, since God is supposed to be merely an immanent force or energy, there is no God who could intervene in the course of nature. God is, from this point of view, the creature of man's imagination. George Burman Foster, e. g. speaks of "man's God-making capacity."[7] "In short, a secular rather than an ecclesiastical explanation of the origin of Christianity is coming to be a commonplace in theological literature," wrote Gerald Birney Smith in 1913.[8]

The new theology teaches, as we have seen, that there never has been particular divine revelation to man, neither through Scripture nor any other agency. Hence what is generally called theology is nothing but supposition and speculation — human thought on these questions; and hu-

[7] *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence,* p. 57.

[8] *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology,* p. 95.

man thought is always in a process of change. It follows that there is no final or absolute religious truth, or, in plain English, there is no religious truth. All supposed religious truth is relative and subjective; it cannot be looked upon as real truth. This is freely taught by new theology writers. "The consequence of this evolutionary point of view," writes Dr. Gerald Birney Smith, "is *the elimination of that quest for finalities and absolutes which is characteristic of the older theological method.*"[9] Another writer says: "The evolutionary theory stands for the relative and finite view of all reality. — Traditional [orthodox] theology, on the contrary, contends for a system of absoluteness and finality in religion and ethics."[10] William Adams Brown, former President of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, after pointing out that the liberalism which he defends has disowned "the outworn standard" of an infallible Bible, as well as the authority of Jesus, says: "When one has once deserted the shores of absolutism and launched one's bark upon the sea of relativity, *there is no harbor, however small, in which one may hope to find a refuge.*"[11]

It will be recalled that Albrecht Ritschl taught the subjectivity of all religious and moral knowledge whatsoever; he believed there are no religious or moral finalities, or absolutes, and that the value of religious doctrines depends on their usefulness, not on their truth. His teaching on "value judgments' shifts the question of the truth of a doctrine to that of its value or usefulness. The new theology teaches that religious ideas are to be used rather than believed and whether a doctrine is true or not is a secondary matter. Indeed these religious or theological

---

[9] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1915, p. 139. Italics mine.

[10] The same, p. 570.

[11] The same, 1912, p. 34. Italics mine.

ideas themselves are believed, by their very exponents, to be of secondary, non-vital importance, though they are supposed to serve a useful purpose. It is indeed a remarkable fact that there are those who accept that which is known to be not the truth and is not even supposed to be true. But again there are those who find it impossible to accept such propositions. They continue to hold fast to the old-fashioned principle that truth is of more value than other values, and hence mere value judgments that are not founded on truth are not worthy of serious consideration.

Evolution, according to the Unitarian Confession, means the continuous "progress of mankind onward and upward forever." It means that mankind is traveling gradually and steadily up an inclined plane to the City of God, as someone has said; Christianity is regarded a gentle stimulant to this splendid cosmic climb. But the stimulating effect of Christianity in this process is, in modernist opinion, apparent rather than real, for both religion and morality are held to be only parts of the evolutionary process itself. Man is considered merely a part of nature, and it follows "that he, like nature, is under the reign of law." This conception leaves no room for human freedom.

"Naturalism denies our freedom and responsibility and makes our consciousness that we are free a beneficient illusion," says Professor Alfred E. Garvie.[12] Henry van Dyke observes that "the modern fatalism is Calvinism with the bottom knocked out." While Calvinism recognizes the supreme will of a holy and righteous God, the new fatalism denies the existence of a personal God who exercises free will. Therefore the modern naturalism is removed from the teaching of Augustine and Calvin as far as the East

[12] *The Christian Certainty Amid the Modern Perplexity*, p. 327.

is removed from the West. Dean Fenn, of Harvard, has well said that "the course of Unitarian thought presents one of the most remarkable curves in all theological history." He points out that under the new "Calvinism of immanence, the freedom of man must again be doubted, if not denied."[13] Professor Herbert Alden Youtz, a representative of the new thoelogy, says: "The virtual [modernistic] fatalism of much so-called Christian philosophy [as taught in some of our colleges and theological seminaries] strikes at the very beating heart of all spiritual conviction, and unmans, emasculates, and stultifies our creative efforts."[14]

In conclusion it may be worthy of notice that religious liberalists as a rule close their eyes to the fact that the modern theology does not fit into the evolutionary scheme. They tell us that the apostles misunderstood Christ and therefore erroneously preached a supernatural religion. Hence all Christendom from the apostles' time to the rise of modern liberalism was wrong in the interpretation of Christianity. According to religious liberalism the long period of about eighteen hundred years was an age of religious deterioration, not of evolution, and only recently has Christianity been brought back to its first estate by the modernists. This is an illustration of inconsistent liberalistic thinking.

---

[13] *Platner, The Religious History of New England,* p. 129.
[14] *Democratizing Theology,* p. 15.

XXIII

WHAT AILS OUR COLLEGES AND SEMINARIES?

The opinion that "the only salvation for the church as well as for the state lies in education," has been advanced by not a few recent writers. On the other hand there are those who see clearly that knowledge, or education, in itself is religiously and morally neutral. It may be acquired and not used, and again it may be used for good or for ill, depending on the character of the one who has acquired it. Dr. Nathaniel Butler, Dean of the School of Pedagogy in the University of Chicago, has well said in *The Christian Student:*

We live no longer in the expectation that the millennium will come through education. We once thought that if we were in condition to found good schools and to bring the boys and girls under the influence of a good education, we could finally put a stop to all unrighteousness and sin. But the fact of it is that education with reference to that point is a total failure. Men do no act according to their knowledge, but they do the things they love to do. It matters not how high we may educate the understanding, the man can, in spite of it, remain a slave to his passions. Mankind do not act according to their best knowledge and wisdom, but do the things they love to do. — While education of the intellect may cause its possessor to beware of the grosser sins, it, at the same time, may be only a means of making the man more cunning.

We shall presently quote a number of writers who are of the opinion that higher education, or the acquisition of it, has undesirable irreligious tendencies. Not for a moment must it be supposed, however, that a highly educated person is made acquainted with facts which are irreconcilable with the teachings of the Christian faith, or that knowledge in itself is possessed of undesirable tendencies. Such a supposition would be entirely erroneous. It is true that in many institutions of higher learning certain unproved theories are taught (such as the hypothesis of evolution) which are contrary to Scripture teaching, and this accounts for much in the way of irreligious influences. Another weighty reason why our colleges and universities are turning out unbelievers is because the professors, in many instances, make it a point to persuade the students that "the faith of their childhood" must be discarded.

The question is here in order, what is this "faith of our childhood" which, we are told, must be abandoned? Clearly it is the old Bible faith: that Christ, the Only-begotten of the Father, came into this world from another realm to redeem and save mankind, that He died on the cross as our substitute and rose from the dead, etc. It is the faith that believes that God hears and answers prayer. In short it is the faith that accepts the Bible as true—the faith which is taught in our homes, Sunday schools, and churches. Children, of course, will not grasp the real import of these truths like those of more mature age; there is a difference in the degree in which the facts and truths of the faith are comprehended and appreciated; but unless children receive erroneous teaching, the faith of childhood, as concerns its content and truths, is the same as that of maturer age.

With some praiseworthy exceptions our denominational colleges (speaking now of the Northland) stand for a

liberalized faith and the abandonment of the faith of childhood by the student, while in state institutions even liberalized religion is often decried and antagonized. Nor do the colleges, as a rule, deny that such is their attitude on the point in question. Professor Walter Scott Athearn, of Boston University, the author of various books on religious education, writes: "Our colleges are engaged in the work of shattering religious conceptions and either ignoring the consequences or holding joint sessions with Christian associations to device ways and means of unloading their victims onto voluntary classes of religion whose amateurs will attempt to rebuild what professionalism has destroyed."[1] Dr. William Bancroft Hill, Professor in Vassar College, says:

> The great religious problem in every college is the same — to prevent the student from putting away religion when, in the process of development, he puts away childish things [referring to the faith of his childhood]. The faith that he brought to college is the faith of his childhood — simple, unchallenged, and suited to the life of the home. In college he finds himself in a new world of thought where his most cherished convictions seem inadequate or erroneous, and he must either enlarge and deepen his faith or else abandon it.[2]

The religious task of our liberalized colleges is, accordingly, supposed to be of a twofold nature. There is abundant evidence to show that Professor Athearn is right in his opinion that the colleges are engaged in the work of shattering the religious conceptions of the students — the faith of our homes and churches. In this self-appointed task they are in a majority of cases apparently successful. On the other hand, their endeavor to persuade the students of the excellency of religious liberalism, and to save them for the

---

[1] *The Church School,* p. 256.

[2] *The Biblical World,* August, 1915, p. 111.

church after they have accepted the modern religious views, is found more difficult. Indeed, liberalistic professors complain that students in the colleges make shipwreck of faith, namely of liberalistic faith as well as of the old Bible faith. If the liberalized students are persuaded to remain within the church, they seem to be of the opinion that the church has no mission that is really worth their while.

"There is a common complaint that college experience . . . . not only does not increase the loyalty of young people to the church but actually cools their ardor," says Dr. George Albert Coe, of the Union Theological Seminary, New York.[3] Professor Gerald Birney Smith, of the University of Chicago, writes:

> There is a widespread feeling among devout evangelical Christians that modern scholarship is somewhat dangerous to religious faith. Many a boy or girl today is warned by parent and by pastor against the "skeptical" influences of a college course. — That religious shipwreck [i. e., the discarding of liberal as well as Biblical religion] has been the fate of a significant number of college graduates is a fact which cannot be denied.[4]

William Jennings Bryan says:

> Higher education brings with it dangers against which the student should be warned. — Some instructors even speak lightly of religion, and, by clothing infidelity in the attractive garb of science and philosophy, lead their pupils into agnosticism — a tragedy which is the more distressing when we remember that college men not only have a prominence far out of proportion to their numbers but exert an influence upon a still larger circle whose members look up to them for example.

Not long ago a religious editor published a symposium on *The College Graduates' Attitude to the Church*. He requested a number of his readers to state their own experience and convictions on this subject. "But we discovered,"

---

[3] *A Social Theory of Religious Education*, p. 274.

[4] *The Biblical World*, July, 1913, p. 9.

he informs us, "that not a few seemed unwilling to express themselves, at least for publication. There seemed to be a fear that if they wrote candidly and definitely, a number of persons, both in the congregation and outside of it, might have their feelings hurt. One of our leading pastors who has in his congregation graduates from all the leading institutions of the country, declared that *only one of the entire number* is actively identified with the work of the Church."[5] One of the replies received by this editor is, because of its frank statements of fact, quoted here almost in full. The writer of the same signs himself "A City Pastor." He says:

It is not cowardice, as you might infer, but tact combined with necessity that causes me to refrain from signing my name to this statement of my experience. Were I to sign my name, I would be compelled, in the interests of the congregation I serve, as well as for family reasons, to omit a part of the unpleasant truth. I prefer not to omit this, because I think such a discussion should be perfectly frank. It is a fact that no one disappointment in my pastoral experience has been greater than the *general unwillingness of college-bred men and women in my Church to do their fair share of the work.* Too often it has been their part to sneer at the faithful souls who are carrying the burden and heat of the day, because many of the latter were not as intelligent as they. But so far as any real "lifting" is concerned, I have had little help from those whose educational advantages gave promise of superior usefulness. My own daughters, I regret to say, were far more useful before they went away to school than they are since they graduated, in spite of all the appeals I have made to them to cast no discredit upon their Alma Mater [one of the denominational colleges] or upon their father and his work. Now they have to be coaxed, and assume any task in such a mood that I feel ashamed and cannot understand why their training at a Christian institution should not have sent them back to me with a greater desire to serve. But in this respect I feel they are like approximately three-fourths of the college graduates in the congregation — *busy critics, but poor work-*

[5] *The Reformed Church Messenger,* September 12, 1918.

ers. Some of these highly educated "do-nothings" would be willing to "accept the nomination" for any appointment that meant high honors without sacrifice of much time, money or effort — but the "grind" of teaching God's word to little children week after week, or drilling a Junior C. E., is "asking too much." They seem to think their time has become too valuable to waste upon Christian work.

Talking about the importance of morale, I feel sure that the morale of my congregation would improve at least one hundred per cent if the forty-nine college-bred members of my flock would set a better example and prove to the rank and file of the membership that training in a higher institution does not unfit anyone for useful service in the Church of which he professes to be a member. True, I have in my Consistory two men who have several university degrees and fellowships and who are among the most helpful laymen I have ever seen or known in the Reformed Church. Also, do I thank God for several noble women, true "yoke-fellows in the Gospel." But the fidelity of these appears to be the exception rather than the rule, when I recall how many are unreliable and inactive, even in these times of direst necessity when God is so evidently summoning His people to be and do their best. I hate to say it, Mr. Editor, but to refrain would be to stultify myself: *I do not believe that the majority of those advantaged by training in our higher institutions are doing their fair share in the local Churches.* For some reason, great numbers of them have "fallen down on the job," and the work of countless pastors is harder because the intellectually privileged are so derelict in their plain duty. Let our educational leaders give heed to this situation. If we pastors are to blame, tell us how and why.

The religious influence of the average university and the more outspokenly liberalistic college is well set forth in the following illustration by Dr. Russell H. Conwell:

I had a dog. He was an exellent fox dog. I was so proud of him. He could follow a trail better than any dog I had ever seen, but I thought he ought to know something more than that. What we call a dog's scent is not smell, but an unfathomable instinct. Man is born with this same instinct. We all have it if we have not destroyed it by education. We go to a university and there destroy

our natural religious instincts in the same way. I invited all the boys of that village in the Berkshire Hills to come up to the barn one day. I showed the fox to the dog, then let the fox go. It went over the meadow and up the hillside, and I soon followed the trail and sowed red pepper where I had seen the fox go over the hill. Then I went back to the barn and let the dog out. I said to the boys, "We are going to teach this dog something. He needs an education." The dog ran like a shot to the track of the fox. But when he struck the red pepper he snarled, began to sneeze and cried piteously. Then he ran down to the brook, whining all the way, and held his head half under the water to overcome the sting of the red pepper in his nose. He had attended the university of red pepper. He had learned all about red pepper, but I could never get him to follow a fox again. He had been educated away from the most important instinct of his nature. The university of red pepper had destroyed his natural instinct for following foxes. So, many men are religious and true and good until they go to school and there lose or cover the very best traits and instincts of their life.

A noteworthy book, published not long ago by Professor James H. Leuba, of Bryn Mawr College,[6] gives reliable information about the religious status and influences of the Christian colleges of America, showing in what degree some of the most fundamental truths of the Christian faith have been discarded. Dr. Leuba has undertaken the task of ascertaining to what extent American scholars, scientists and college students believe in the existence of God and the immortality of the soul. The facts which he presents for consideration were gleaned from a very careful questionnaire investigation. Space forbids to describe here the thorough-going, impartial method by which he obtained the data on which his conclusions are based.

The results of this investigation give a great deal of material for sober thought. The data collected by Professor

[6] *The Belief in God and Immortality.*

Leuba would indicate that only 14 per cent of psychologists, 18 per cent of biologists, 19 per cent of sociologists, 32 per cent of historians and 34 per cent of physicists believe in the existence of God. The number of those who accept the immortality of the soul is somewhat larger. One of the most notable results of the investigation is the fact that among college students the percentage of believers is far larger in the lower than in the higher classes, showing that the influence of the colleges is in a measure responsible for the prevailing unbelief. From 40 to 50 per cent of the young men leaving college do not accept the belief in a God who answers prayer.

It will bear emphasis that these figures represent stubborn facts. "The careful reader will not be disposed to deny the great — we might almost say the alarming — significance of these statistics," says a reviewer of the book in question.[7] "We have looked in vain these two years," writes Professor A. S. Zerbe, of the Central Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, "for a denial of the correctness of Leuba's figures, but unless the denial escaped our notice, we must conclude that he records facts."[8] A reviewer in *The American Journal of Theology* says: "The author has put in his debt all those who have the welfare of religion at heart by showing them that *the situation is really much more serious than most of them had supposed*."[9] Professor William Benton Greene, Jr., of Princeton Theological Seminary, concludes a noteworthy article on this book as follows:

In his latest book Professor Leuba exhibits with awful clear-

---

[7] Professor Benjamin W. Bacon, in *The Christian Register*, May 9, 1918.

[8] *The Reformed Church Messenger*, April 24, 1919.

[9] Vol. XXI., October, 1917, p. 633.

ness the kind of teaching that prevails in our so-called Christian colleges and also the wide and blighting and terrible influence of that teaching. These are subjects on which the churches have long needed, if they have not always wanted light. Now that they have it, what is their duty? Their life depends on their answer.[10]

Dr. Leuba sums up the results of his inquiry:

The situation revealed by the present statistical studies demands a revision of public opinion regarding the prevalence of the two cardinal beliefs of official Christianity; and shows the futility of the efforts of those who would meet the present religious crisis by devising a more efficient organization and co-operation of the churches, or more attractive social features, or even a more complete consecration of the church membership to its task. The essential problem facing organized Christianity is constituted by the widespread rejection of its two fundamental dogmas.

Shocking as are the revelations given in Dr. Leuba's book concerning the religious position of many of our college professors, a more serious matter is the fact that men questioning the existence of God and the immortality of the soul are found even among the leaders of theological thought in the seminaries. A striking testimony to the point is found in an editorial review of Dr. Leuba's work, published in a liberalistic magazine. It is pointed out by the writer of this review that, if Professor Leuba had sent his questionnaire to leading theologians, "he might have been surprised at the answers," for "he might have found some of them less concerned about the dogmas of the church than he seems to be, and as wide-awake to the real problems facing the church and modern society as are the scientists, historians, sociologists, and psychologists."[11]

Is it possible, it may be asked, that there are Christian theologians who question the existence of God and the im-

---

[10] *The Princeton Theological Review,* 1917, p. 346.

[11] *The Biblical World, May,* 1918, p. 307.

mortality of the soul, and who are less concerned about the most cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith than is Professor Leuba who is an avowed unbeliever? Yes, this is the case, as will be shown elsewhere. Wherein, then, we must further ask, do such theologians differ from the freethinkers? What is the difference between their position and that of outspoken unbelievers? Let us see.

The freethinkers, in a statement of their principles, published in their most widely read organ, *The Truth Seeker,* give their position as to various points of doctrine. Concerning the existence of God they are silent. They do not officially deny His existence; at least, the denial of God is not found in the list of doctrines which they disown.[12] The silence of the freethinkers on this point shows that they leave the question open. The same is true of their view of immortality. They say expressly: "As to the immortality of the soul, we neither affirm nor deny; we wait for evidence." Clearly they are undecided on this question, as well as on that of the existence of God. This is but a way of saying that they do not accept these doctrines. It is apparent, then, that the freethinkers' position concerning these fundamental doctrines is the same as that of the scientists, historians, sociologists, etc., who have given a negative answer to Dr. Leuba's questions.

Now this is also the attitude of the theologians to whom the reviewer in the said magazine article refers, intimating that they would have given negative answers to the questions concerning God and immortality. These theologians are representatives of the modern religious liberalism, the new theology. They stand for non-doctrinal, undogmatic,

[12] This may be ascribed to the fact that certain modern philosophers and liberal theologians give definitions of God which are not unacceptable even to radical unbelievers — atheists.

non-creedal religion, that is to say, for precisely the same sort of religion as is professed by the freethinkers according to their own official statement. The liberalistic theologians, like the freethinkers, give their attention foremost (sometimes exclusively) to what they speak of as important practical questions meaning problems of moral reform and material improvement of various description. They overlook the fact that such doctrines as that of God and immortality are of incomparably greater practical importance than questions of improvement and reform.

The reason why the representatives of the modern liberalistic theology take an attitude of comparative indifference toward the most important questions is, because they reject the source of our knowledge of these things. They deny the inspiration and authority of Scripture. Therefore they must confess ignorance as to the points of teaching for which the Scriptures are our only source of knowledge. They are agnostics on these points. (An agnostic is, literally, one who does not know.) So it has come to pass that Paul Elmer More can truthfully say concerning our liberalized seminaries: "A divinity school is a place where they investigate poverty and spread agnosticism." In fact, the new theology men in the seminaries often pride themselves of their doctrinal agnosticism. They do not claim to have positive truth regarding the Christian fundamentals. Therefore they do not teach affirmatively on these points. The student is supposed to draw his own conclusions, not however from Scripture evidence but on other grounds. If the student's opinion should chance to differ from that of the professor (assuming that the professor has an opinion on the point in question), it matters nothing, since both teacher and student are working with mere suppositions concerning which they profess to

know nothing reliable. The most essential doctrines are reduced and reconstructed into non-essential secondary suppositions. These professors desire to develop in the students a tendency, as William Herbert Hobbs rightly says, "to see both sides of every question and actually to be proud of never reaching a definite decision as to which side was wrong and which right." All doctrine, including the question of the existence of God, is treated as a secondary matter.

But we must not fail to note that though the representatives of the new theology ascribe little importance to doctrine, they with one accord reject the old Biblical doctrines They are, after all, quite positive in their negative teaching. When they say that questions of doctrine and creed are unimportant matters, their thought is not that it matters little whether the student take the conservative or liberalistic point of view. On the contrary, they believe it to be an important matter that he disowns orthodoxy and accepts Evolutionism and other unproven theories which are in harmony with the spirit of the time. But so long as the student disclaims the old Bible faith he is, as a rule, welcome to his opinion. In other words, there is only one dogma which the representatives of the more advanced religious liberalism accept, namely the doctrine of religious agnosticism: that there is no positive religious truth. If they believed they had not only negative but also positive truth, they could not take an attitude of comparative indifference as to doctrinal points in general.

We have the testimony of liberalistic professors to the effect that taking a course in a modern college has a tendency to dissuade young men from entering the ministry. For an example, Gerald Birney Smith says: "Many of the most enterprising and devoted men in our colleges deliberately

turn away from the Christian ministry because they are convinced, rightly or wrongly, that there is no place in the church for the kind of free and independent thinking which they have learned [at College] to love and to employ constructively."[13] It will be recalled, however, that there is a liberalistic wing of the church in which there is every opportunity for free thought and for unscriptural teaching. May it not be that the young men abandon the thought of the ministry because they believe the liberalistic ministry is not worth their while? Such is, without question, the case when theological students in the modernized seminaries, after they have been won for the new theology, decide that there are more important things to do than to preach it. "The scientific study of theology in a [liberalized] divinity school has occasionally impelled students to abandon the ministry," said Professor George Burman Foster, of the University of Chicago.[14] Many who after their ordination have accepted liberal views, were honest enough to leave the ministry, finding that they have no vital religious message. Professor John Alfred Faulkner, of Drew Theological Seminary, writes: "I have heard of a theological school where the students leave the class-rooms in tears because their faith has been shattered or insulted or grieved by what their professors have said."[15] Dr. Augustus Hopkins Strong says of the student in the liberalistic seminary:

> He has all his early conceptions of Scripture and of Christian doctrine weakened, has no longer any positive message to deliver, loses the ardor of his love for Christ, and at his graduation leaves the seminary, not to become preacher or pastor, as he had once hoped, but to sow his doubts broadcast, as teacher in some college, as editor of some religious journal, as secretary of some Young

---

[13] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1917, p. 349.

[14] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, p. 743.

[15] *On the Value of Church History*, p. 46.

Men's Christian Association, or as agent of some mutual life insurance company.

Nor is a man under such circumstances to be blamed for abandoning the ministry. The blame rests on the seminary who robbed him of the faith of his childhood, and on the church which tolerates such conditions and supports such an institution. If the ministry of the Gospel is the greatest, the noblest calling — as it, considered from the Christian viewpoint, truly is — what about an institution which, yielding to the spirit of the time, deprives a minister of his vital Christian message? Is not such an institution engaged in a most miserable business? We are told, of course, that a man may accept the new theology and yet be a Christian minister; the fact is apparent, however, that the liberalistic ministry is not an enviable calling. It will be recalled that, while the great majority of Unitarian ministers are men who formerly held pastorates in evangelical churches but have made shipwreck of faith, only forty per cent of former evangelical preachers who enter the Unitarian ministry remain in this ministry. Sixty per cent leave it to follow some other pursuit.

Does not a Christian minister who accepts the new theology find himself in a dilemma? Modern religious liberalism has no answer to the questions that lie at the foundation of the Christian religion. The new theology does not know what to do with sin. It has no message of salvation for the despairing sinner. It does not have a God who really answers prayer. It stands for agnosticism regarding the future life. Unless the modernized minister has an elastic conscience and has learned the art of dissimulation, he has, at the open grave, only words of mock comfort such as Robert G. Ingersoll had at the grave of his father. God pity the preacher who is supposed to have a

vital religious message of eternal truth, but has in fact only non-essential, secondary, unfounded human suppositions to present, while leaving his people under the impression that he has something similar to the Christian message. Is it any wonder that "many of the most enterprising and devoted men turn away from the Christian ministry" when they accept the new theology?

The question is here pertinent: Could there be a more disgusting variety of moral jugglery and intellectual counterfeiting than the modern liberalistic denial of God which comes under misleading theological and philosophical phrases? Many of our leading seminaries and colleges are guilty of this gravest offence. Professor George R. Dodson says rightfully:

> When the liberalistic professors [in the theological seminaries] speak of God, you as honest men naturally suppose they mean something objectively real, a being of infinite wisdom and goodness, the conscious ground of the moral order, whereas they may really refer to their own ideas only. If you questioned them narrowly, you would in some cases find them holding a pragmatist view of God as *nothing more than a successful and satisfactory working scheme.*
>
> If this is serious for you, for the young minister it is tragic. Some men may be content to go on using great words which for them do not imply objective realities, but the most clear-sighted and noble will be unhappy in thus attempting to lead a double life, to pretend and speak as if they believed in what is to them only an idea or postulate or working scheme. They will perceive in time that their steed is only a stick-horse and that they carry what they make believe carries them. They will believe in God while they can, but when they are no longer able to do so they will realize that no good purpose can be served by *disguising a practical atheism under theistic phrases.*[15]

It is said that, since we owe so much in various lines

[15] *The Christian Register*, October 2, 1919, p. 151. Italics mine.

to our institutions of higher education, severe criticism of them is out of place. Is it not true that they have rendered great service to the church and to society in general, and should we not be sincerely grateful for it? Most certainly. Science, for example, is doing wonders in our day. But in so far as science "works", that is to say to the extent that it has been tested by practical application and use, it is *not* established on the hypothesis of evolution nor on any other unscriptural theory, but is altogether in harmony with Scripture teaching. As concerns its real value and usefulness, modern science would therefore be the same if all scientists were believers in the Scriptures as God's inspired Word.

It goes without saying that no one will criticize the colleges and universities in so far as they are rendering service to the human family. However, the fact cannot be ignored that many of these institutions stand for religious liberalism and unbelief, and in so far as this is the case they do not render service but disservice to society. The offence consists in this that, besides the dissemination of real learning, they bring destructive religious influences to bear upon the student.

There are those who tell us that our fears are ungrounded. We must have faith, they say, in truth's power to make its own way and to vanquish error. Our apprehension regarding young people in agnostic institutions has, we are told, its roots in distrust of truth. Such sentences give expression to one of the curiously perverted ideas of modern liberalism. But what of the professors in some of our institutions of higher learning who not only make light of the doctrines of the Christian *faith* but of Christian *morals* as well? Are we expected to accept the supposition that wrong ethical teaching and perverse moral influences are

harmless because of the power of truth to vanquish error? Why educate at all along those lines, if such be the case? The late Dr. William R. Harper, a noted liberalist, once said, "If I were a boy again, I would read every book I could reach." He overlooked the fact that a flood of immoral, let alone irreligious, literature is on the market in our day which is unfit to be read and which has poisoned the minds of a host of young people. Does not the United States government forbid the transmission of immoral books through the mails? Is Anthony Comstock to be praised or censured for his crusade against morally pernicious literature?

If the danger to our young people from morally questionable literature is real, is there not even greater danger for them to sit at the feet of those who profess agnosticism in regard to Christian morals? And is there not every reason to believe that irreligious teachings and influences are every bit as harmful as those of morally objectionable nature? Are not the former indeed more insidiously dangerous and as a rule more radically destructive than the latter? Yet the fact remains that truth will be victorious in the end. Truth will always be truth whether you and I recognize it as such or not. Would it not be absurd to suppose that truth will turn into error unless we defend it? But while it is true that "truth crushed to earth will rise again," there is grave danger that it will not rise for those who crush it. Irreparable personal loss necessarily results from the rejection of vital truth.

It is for this reason that truth must be defended and error opposed. Efforts must be put forth to get men to accept the truth. Nothing in human life is comparable in importance with the acceptance of religious truth. And in the realm of religion and ethics it is easier to yield to error than

to that which is true. Even Goethe who was not a Christian believer said, men follow error for the reason that to do so is easier than to embrace truth. To take the course of least resistance and yield to the anti-Christian spirit of the time is easier than to be loyal to Jesus Christ and fight the good fight of faith. It requires more earnest and determined effort to follow the truth than to yield to error. For a young person who for any length is sitting at the feet of a teacher defending moral or religious error it is the natural thing to become tainted; indeed it is, speaking generally, inevitable.

There are instances in which young people and parents have concluded, since courses in the Bible are offered in some of the colleges, that these institutions must be safe. All depends however on the personal position of the teacher. Bible study under a teacher who stands for liberalism is almost invariably even more objectionable than the study of other subjects under such a teacher. Not seldom it is the case that modernistic Bible study is of so predominantly critical character that the religious side, even from a liberal viewpoint, is lost sight of. "Critical courses in the Bible might be anything but religious," says Professor Athearn.[16]

The attendance of colleges which stand for the liberalistic religious views is unjustifiable. To take such a risk is a moral wrong. These schools, by their own confession, bend their energies upon destroying the faith of childhood. He who discards the old Bible faith suffers greater loss than all the learning of the schools can make good. Young people desiring to devote themselves to the acquisition of higher education should be advised to choose a sound institution. Again, if the opportunity to attend such a school

[16] *The Church School*, p. 257.

be absent, they should realize that there are thousands of men and women who have never attended college but have acquired a better education than the average graduate. It may be worth while to notice, in passing, that Dean Frederick S. Jones, of Yale University, has recently expressed a sentiment in regard to the purpose of a college education which is now widely recognized as reasonable:

> There was a time when I thought that we must teach in college first and foremost the learning of books. In these days I would bend every effort to the making of good citizens, and by a good citizen I think I mean a man who is master of himself, earns his own living, and as far as possible in doing it is of benefit to his fellow men.

The question suggests itself: Should not the Christian home be equal to such a task?

If a Christian student cannot consistently attend a college that is spreading religious liberalism, what about the schools of agnosticism which go by the name theological seminaries and divinity schools? Are they not even mightier agencies of evil than the liberalistic colleges? To those who recognize the vast differences, the fundamental contrasts between the modern liberalism and the old Bible faith — to such it is perfectly clear that the modernized theological seminary is in very deed the greatest menace, the most formidable foe to the Christian faith and to the moral fibre of the nation. The spread of agnosticism as to the Christian faith and morals by the theological seminaries spells disaster to Christianity.

"What is the effect of the new theology methods upon our theological seminaries?" asks Dr. Augustus Hopkins Strong. He answers:

> The effect is to deprive the Gospel message of all definiteness and to make professors and students disseminators of doubts. — The theological seminaries of almost all our denominations are

becoming so infected with this grievous error, that they are not so much organs of Christ as they are organs of Antichrist.[17]

It is said that in one of the leading European countries the church, or sections of it, favors the liquor traffic for the reason that some of the prelates of the church are financially interested. What an inconsistency, you say. But is it not a greater offence to support an institution that stands for the repudiation of the fundamentals of the Christian faith and Christian morals? If patronage of the liquor traffic is a moral wrong, is not the support of such an institution (be it as a student or in some other way) a so much greater wrong as these institutions are a greater menace to Christian faith and morality? Is it not impossible to us to effectively combat this menace so long as we patronize it in any way whatever? When we are told that religious liberalism, as represented by the said institutions, stands for creditable ideals we must not lose sight of the fact that irreligion and atheism are never so dangerous as when they come under a cloak of idealism.

But what is the church to do without the seminaries? Does she not need them for the education and training of the coming ministers? — In the first place the outstanding fact is to be recognized that not all seminaries are tainted with liberalism. The church owes a great debt of gratitude to the faithful men in the sound, conservative seminaries who have not bowed their knees to Baal; as well as to the educational boards and commissions which consistently maintain the proper Scriptural attitude. Let students attend such schools. Let them never lose sight of the fact that a man is better qualified for the Christian ministry if he maintain the faith of his childhood, than if he lose it in the attempt to acquire more learning.

---

[17] *Tour of the Missions. Observations and Conclusions*, p. 189.

Sometimes it is said that a young man who has an experiental knowledge of Christ need not hesitate to attend a modernized seminary. Cannot God keep him sound in the faith? The point in question however is, whether it is morally right to go to such an institution. If these schools are agencies of evil, it behooves a Christian to shun them. If you do that which is morally wrong, you have no right to expect that God will keep you and bless you in it. Religious liberalism is now in the air. It is propagated from pulpits, through papers, magazines and countless books. There is danger of becoming tainted without attending schools that have written liberalism on their banners. Unless God does a miracle — and He is not given to doing miracles for the disobedient — you will, if you take a course in such a seminary, come out tainted. You have no right to be a student in an institution that is given to combating the faith. Your very attendance at such a school would be inconsistent with loyalty to Jesus Christ.

A further fact to be recognized and which has already been touched upon is that training in a higher institution of learning is not claimed to be indispensable for the ministry of the Word of God. Looking closely into this question we find that in most denominations the lion's share of ministerial work is done by men who have never attended a college or seminary. In the Baptist Church, for example, according to Dr. Henry L. Morehouse, only one eighth of all the white ministers in this country have received a college and seminary training. In the year 1913 one sixth only of the men ordained to the ministry in the Baptist Church had received such training.[18] There is every reason

[18] *The Record;* Rochester Theological Seminary Bulletin, May, 1917, p. 51.

to believe that in the Methodist Church the percentage of college and seminary men in the ministry is somewhat similar. Bishop Francis J. McConnell, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, informs us that some of the best pulpits in the denomination with which he is connected are filled by men that have not taken a seminary course.[19] In the Free Churches of England there were, in 1909, less than 10,000 ordained preachers, but above 50,000 so-called lay-preachers that were without special training. It is a noteworthy fact that Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Dwight Lyman Moody and many other untitled preachers had acquired a better education than many a seminary graduate. One of the soundly evangelical and most active Christian bodies in America, numbering about 7,500 members and fully supporting about fifty American missionaries in foreign countries have among their pastors and mission workers not one that has either a college or a seminary degree. And there are other Christian bodies in which prevailing conditions are somewhat similar. "Never were the ministries of the Anglican and Free Churches better fitted by scholarship and by general attainment to perform their task," says Sir Joseph Compton-Rickett, and yet, especially in the Free Churches "the sermon is mostly ethical, ofttimes literary, but it fails to search and grip as in former days."[20] Another British writer, George Tyrrell, recalling the great success of the early Methodist preachers, says: "The preaching of practical Christianity is easily within the capacity of simple and practical men.—Do we not immensely exaggerate the amount of education required in ordinary cases?"[21]

---

[19] *The Harvard Theological Review*, 1915, p. 328.
[20] *The Contemporary Review*, May, 1917, p. 630.
[21] The same, May, 1909, p. 586.

Does this mean that learning is to be discounted? By no means. It does mean that learning is not to be sought in institutions which, through their religious attitude, plainly are agencies of evil. The disastrous influences — religious and moral — proceeding from such institutions cannot be ignored. And, as already intimated, the opinion that unbiblical, irreligious tendencies are the necessary sequence of higher education is not for a moment to be countenanced. Martin Luther spoke of the leading universities of his time as the gates of hell — they were the most formidable powers arrayed against the Gospel. But not for a moment did Luther entertain the thought that the antagonistic attitude of the universities was due to their superior learning. He often refers to the anti-evangelical professors as "the sophists of the schools." By setting himself as a steel-wall against the universities he by no means disfavored education. Furthermore, though the "sophists" of Luther's time claimed to speak in the name of scholarship and science, they, as a rule, changed their position if the university with which they were connected chanced to be located in a state whose ruler decided to accept the Lutheran reformation. Obviously they took their orders from "the powers that be," while they claimed to speak in the name of scholarship. In our age there are many who advance a similar claim while in fact they take their orders from the spirit of the time.

Liberalistic theological professors have openly boasted that they have it in their power to liberalize the church with which they are connected. They think that the church cannot do without the seminaries and, after the seminaries are liberalized, the church has no way to prevent the spread of liberalism within her borders. It is true that as the seminaries go, so will the church go, but the opinion that the church cannot, if necessity requires it, exist and pros-

per without the seminaries is not well founded. While it is readily recognized that the sound and safe seminaries are a great aid to the cause of Christ, the view that we must have seminaries, even if they be liberalized, is unacceptable.

We have fallen upon times when it has become the fashion for churches to be more concerned about the preacher's correct grammar than his Scriptural soundness. The lack of spiritual power is a characteristic of our time It cannot be rightfully claimed that such power comes through education. The agnostic theological seminaries offer striking proof of the undeniable fact that higher education and spiritual blindness go only too often hand in hand. Professor Philip Schaff said once in his parting counsel to one of his classes: "Remember first of all the true bearing of theological study on your personal character. Scholarship is good, virtue is better, holiness is best of all. Your learning and eloquence will do little good in the world unless they are quickened by spiritual power." A Unitarian editor writes: "The preachers who hold the greatest number of hearers are those who are fairly fanatical, in worldly eyes, in the proclamation of a defined and a working faith."[22]

A word remains to be said regarding the Bible Schools. The increasing danger arising from the liberalistic tendencies of the colleges makes imperative the existence of theological schools which do not require a college degree for admission. Furthermore the Bible Schools do not depend on the liberalistic colleges and universities for competent teachers. The Bible Schools are today a bulwark of positive Bible faith. Most of the more prominent defenders of the faith are connected with these schools. A writer in *The Moravian* says:

---

[22] *The Christian Register*, March 7, 1918.

It is true that I do not agree with the teachings of the Bible Schools at every point, nevertheless it is also true that most of the criticism and opposition to the Bible Institutes comes from sources inspired by the higher destructive criticism. We can most naturally expect this very thing. I would just as soon expect these people to say something good about Bible Institutes as to expect the owner of a brewery to say something good about prohibition. To men who profess to be ambassadors of Christ, interpreters and ministers of Christ and His gospel, eating the bread of the church, often in the best remunerated positions in the gift of the church, and yet argue away the supernatural origin and power of the gospel in the lives of men, who deny the necessity and the fact of regeneration in the heart of the individual, substituting for the real gospel of Christ a man-devised cultural veneer — to such men the Bible Institutes must be a thorn in the flesh as well as in the spirit.

Opposition to the Bible Schools is, apparently, increasing in modernist circles. A liberalistic writer has referred to them as a "pest", meaning probably that they are, in his opinion, the most formidable impediment obstructing the way of modernism. In the Conference of Theological Seminaries, held in the month of August, 1918, at Cambridge, Mass., a speaker referred to those "who are now being fearfully ministered to by products of Bible Schools,"[24] and a Unitarian editor says in a report of the same convocation: "Throughout the Conference there was a recurrent note that one of the chief enemies of an educated ministry is the so-called Bible School."[25] The question seems here in order: would it have been too much to expect of this conference to consider the fact that a great many of our seminary students are being trained in anti-Christian, naturalistic "theology" and that people are "fearfully min-

---

[23] *The Biblical World,* August, 1916, p. 68.
[24] *The Christian Register,* August 22, 1918, p. 8.
[25] The same, p. 5.

istered to" by some of the products of these seminaries. As a proof that this is not an overstatement we quote here from a topic card given out recently by the minister of a Unitarian church in one of our larger cities, announcing a series of addresses. Here we read:

> The old religion, based upon supernatural and divine revelations, is being supplanted by a religion based upon the natural and human relations. The old moral sanctions are giving way and new sanctions must be put in their place. The old faith in divine providence is toppling and reeling, and a new faith in human providence is slowly rising in strength and power.[26]

Is it not a significant fact that in a Conference of Theological Seminaries a recurrent note of censure of the Bible Schools is heard while, according to published reports, the fact that religious naturalism and atheism is spread by the seminaries is never touched upon?

It is pleasant to notice that there is at least one writer who, though he has accepted liberalistic views, has retained something of his former opinion of the Bible Schools. Clarence J. Harris writes in *The Christian Register*[27] about Dr. James M. Gray, Dean of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago: "Whatever may be the theological narrowness of such a man, one thing is certain, the several courses of Bible study under Dr. Gray did more for the writer as a minister than all the theology meted out in two seminaries." What a pity that the writer of these words stands no longer for the old truth. Presumably he yielded to liberalism under seminary influences, yet, in the same article he deplores the coldness and lack of power in the Unitarian Church. — Every lover of the Bible as God's Word, every believer in the primitive Christian message should be interested in the

---

[26] The same, February 26, 1920, p. 22.

[27] The same, April 11, 1918.

Bible Schools, as well as in the Seminaries which unswervingly stand for the Christian truth.

XXIV

THE IMMORALITY OF THEOLOGICAL COUNTERFEITING AND CAMOUFLAGE

When counterfeiting is mentioned in connection with the new theology, there are always those who are ready to talk of unfairness and partiality. It may be in order, therefore, to give the word, at the outset, to new theology men who frankly admit that liberalistic theologians have indulged in word-jugglery and camouflage. Before hearing the testimony of men who represent the religious liberalism, it may be well to recall that Ritschl, the father of the new theology, defended the principle that it is right and proper, in order to allay the fears of the conservatives, to express the new theological opinions in the old familiar words. In Ritschl's theology certain doctrines are substantially modified or radically changed, but the changed doctrines come in the expressions and phrases of the old theology; new meanings are ascribed to the old words. This means that, though the new theology differs radically from the old, it is given an orthodox appearance. It is presented under the guise of the familiar vocabulary of orthodoxy. Ever since the days of Albrecht Ritschl has theological counterfeiting been in fashion among modernists.

In recent years not a few representatives of the new theology have freely confessed that camouflage and counterfeiting, as indulged in by modern theologians, is unjustifiable. President McGiffert says, for example: "Thanks to

our careless thinking, to our elastic consciences, we still profess to believe these doctrines," namely doctrines of Biblical Christianity. Professor Gerald Birney Smith, of the University of Chicago, points out that the presentation of certain new theology views "is practically certain to abound in skillfully devised ambiguities which obscure rather than reveal the actual content of the theologian's thought. But if once the spirit of intellectual juggling be admitted into any procedure, it is no longer possible to claim moral superiority for it. The New Testament itself reminds us that the 'double-minded man is unstable in all his ways'."[2] This author says further:

> If there be allowed a spirit of ingenious juggling by which the newer [theological] science is made to yield something resembling the older conclusions, the sense of honor is inevitably dulled.[3] — The subtle temptation to "harmonize" contradictory elements by clever analogies, so that new meaning may be read into old words and the semblance of an unchanging theology may be retained is all too frequently yielded to.[4] — New meanings are thus smuggled in under familiar labels.[5] — Modern books on theology frequently indulge in clever rhetorical statements which serve, indeed, to allay the fears of conservative Christians, but which fail to meet the demands of earnest and exact thinking. Such adjustment of statements are likely to involve a failure to be thoroughly loyal either to Scripture or to the demands of criticism. And when stern loyalty is relaxed, the door to timeserving is wide open.[6]

Quite right, representatives of new theology views may, by intellectual juggling, disperse the fears of conservative

---

[1] *The Hibbert Journal,* vol. VIII, p. 210.
[1] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1911, p. 235.
[2] *Social Idealism and the Changing Theology,* p. 179.
[3] The same, p. 181.
[4] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1912, p. 606.
[5] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 489.
[6] The same, p. 490.

Christians and persuade them of the soundness of liberalistic teachings. Too often they are successful in such endeavors. For, is not the pious language of Scripture used in the presentation of these views? Does not the coin which is offered bear the proper superscription and symbol? What matters it to the modern conscience that the content and fabric is different from the genuine article? — But such counterfeiting is nothing less than deception — pious deception perchance. From the viewpoint of morality and common honesty it is altogether inexcusable. A British writer says on this point, after criticizing the liberal churchmen for the practice of answering questions concerning the creed in the affirmative, when they actually disbelieve the statements: "What a pass have we come to! Here are leaders of the Church — an institution one of whose main objects is the propagation of truth — here are our spiritual pastors and masters actually asserting that it is justifiable to assert your belief in statements which you do not believe."[7] John Morley, in his book *On Compromise,* wrote: "The first advance towards either the renovation of one faith or the growth of another, must be the abandonment of those habits of hypocritical conformity and compliance which have filled the air of England of today with gross and obscuring mists." Dr. James Martineau said: "I am persuaded that honorable laymen, themselves of [liberalistic] Broad Church sympathies, are more awake than is commonly supposed to the essential immorality of the liberal clerical position."[8]

A Unitarian writer says: "I have an old friend, a clergyman of another church, who recites his creed with his

---

[7] *The Hibbert Journal,* No. 47, p. 675.

[8] The same, No. 46, p. 333.

congregation every Sunday. He tells me the distress it is to him that it is not his creed. That old friend of mine is trying to do his duty under fearfully difficult conditions. And they cost him his self-respect."[9] When Dr. Hugh R. Orr, of Pittsburgh, severed his connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, to unite with the Unitarians, Bishop J. F. Berry made the remark in public that "it would be far better if many ministers who are preaching the Unitarian doctrine in the Methodist Episcopal Church would be as honest as Dr. Orr." "The Unitarian Church is open to these men; why, then, sail under false colors?" asks *The Presbyterian;* "why not be honest? Why not have the courage of their conviction?" *Zion's Advocate* said a few years ago:

> When men surrender their faith in the supernatural and in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian Church, and can no longer preach and teach them, why do they not, like honorable gentlemen, resign the responsibilities which they have accepted, and go out and establish a platform of their own? If they have the truth, why do they not show their confidence in their teachings by organizing their own institutions instead of continuing to receive their support from those whose beliefs they have solemnly promised to espouse? I think that common honor and honesty would lead them to such a step.[10]

It is seen, then, that there are new theology men who confess to the inexcusableness of the practice of presenting the modern liberalism under an orthodox cloak. These men are of the more radical liberalistic school and make no secret of their denial of the Christian fundamentals. But the question is here in order, Is not the position of the more radical religious liberalists even more vulnerable and inexcusable than that of the more moderate school? Is it

---

[9] *The Christian Register,* February 20, 1919, p. 13.

[10] *The Bible Champion,* 1916, p. 130.

anything less than counterfeiting and camouflage when the more outspoken modernists uphold a mere semblance of theology, though by their own confession their theology is an entirely secondary matter? Some of the liberalists have discarded every trace of the Christian faith and theology but continue to lay claim to the Christian and religious name.

A noteworthy instance of this kind is brought to our attention by the book *The New Orthodoxy,* published by The University of Chicago Press. The author is Professor Edward Scribner Ames, of the University of Chicago, who is also an ordained minister in an evangelical church. Now, you would suppose a book on orthodoxy to treat on such themes as God and His holiness, sin and its wretchedness, the way of salvation, the immortality of the soul, etc. But this book on *The New Orthodoxy* simply ignores these things. The author mentions God a few times but conceives Him (as a liberalistic reviewer has rightly said) as "only a kind of symbol for the vital spark." Personality is ascribed to Him in the sense as it is sometimes ascribed to a city or a college. Worship is held to be beneath the dignity of modern man. The reviewer already mentioned points out that "Mr. Ames is not much excited about theology. He seems, indeed, to regard theology as rather in a class with astrology," or, in other words, as superstition.[11] Notwithstanding all this, this book is given to the world under the title of *The New Orthodoxy* — a striking instance of liberalistic camouflage. *The Biblical World* is authority for the statement that the attitude to religion taken by Professor Ames "is so widely prevalent in our day as to be characteristic of it."[12]

---

[11] *The New Republic,* May 10, 1919.

[12] *The Biblical World,* January, 1919, p. 84.

It is generally admitted, as has been pointed out elsewhere, that the differences between the old and the new theology are of a vital nature and that the new theology is the result of a radical revolution. Is it not strange, therefore, that the attempt is made to carry water on both shoulders and claim adherence to the old as well as the new theological views or, as is now often the case, to openly deny the faith but retain the religious and Christian name? Many have surrendered to modernism and yet undertake to convince the conservatives that such is not the case. Or they, while frankly rejecting the Biblical theology and the old Christian faith, insist on retaining the Christian name. The case in the first instance is much the same as if a statesman who has stood for a given platform discarded its "planks" but not its name, and endeavored to make his old friends believe that he is loyal to the old party, while to those who accept the new platform he freely admits that he does no longer hold his former views. Should not his new friends, in their own interest censure such duplicity?

One of the causes of the general moral decline of our time is the timeserving, dissimulating, dishonest theological position of many ministers and theological professors. A recent writer says on this point:

> A man cannot profess one thing with his lips and believe another thing in his heart without suffering some loss of moral values, no matter what interpretation he may place upon his words. Inconsistency in religion does not end there. Nothing is more responsible for a growing loss of moral values than the kind of intellectual deceit that is so often practiced in churches. We talk about chincanery in politics and about subtlety in business, but they are well matched in many of our professions of religion; and if they sought sanction, it could be readily found in the practices of many ecclesiastical institutions.

A similar instance is that of the book *The Next Step in Religion,* by Professor Sellars, of the University of Michigan. This book is even more outspoken in its frank denial of God, eternity and all that is supernatural; it is in fact, a defence of rank infidelity. Nevertheless it comes under the cloak of religion. The author says: "Is it justifiable to retain the term religion when its ancient setting has been so completely discarded [by the author himself]? I have myself asked this question many a time. For many years I felt that it would be better to give up the word entirely as indisolubly bound up with those ideas and beliefs which the modern trained mind is outgrowing."[13] He says, he has finally decided to retain the term, but demands that "we must be firm in our negations of the old views." "If religion is to survive," this author thinks, "it must be human and social. It is they who insist upon a supernatural foundation and object who are its enemies."[14] True, the defenders of a supernatural religion, such as were Christ and the apostles and the Christian leaders of all periods, are the opponents of the sort of thing for which this author stands. What offends us in particular is that this atheistic, materialistic thing comes under a religious cloak and pretends to be a substitute for and improvement on the Christian religion. A reviewer of this book in so radically liberalistic a paper as *Unity,* says, it is neither honest nor useful for one holding such a viewpoint to lay claim to the name of religion, "but," this reviewer adds, "*the use of words in a sense totally different* [from their real sense] *is a part of the obscurantism now prevalent* [in new theology circles]."[15]

---

[13] *The Next Step in Religion,* p. 221.

[14] The same, p. 225.

[15] July 3, 1919. Italics not in the original.

Professor Herman Mulert, of Leipzig University, wrote: "Nothing can more deeply injure Protestant Christianity than the suspicion that the minister does not speak out freely his deepest conviction,"[16] in other words, that he pretends to be orthodox when such is not the case. "Strange it is that the liberal clergymen cannot see the injury they are causing both to religion and to their Church by these methods," says a British writer referring to the practice of professing a doctrine which one does not believe and arguing that this is permissible on the ground that new (unreal) meanings are put into the old words. "Laymen who think and are honest are fast deserting the Church, and, what is perhaps more serious, young men who think and are honest find it impossible to enroll themselves as her ministers."[17]

A most discouraging "sign of our time" is the prevalence of the practice of "hedging" among theological writers and professors. Men of high position in the church are playing fast and loose with words, they find it in their conscience to make a statement of their faith with mental reservations; they are trifling with the Christian religion and morality. It is all so different from the transparent candor with which the believers of all ages have stated their faith; it is even different from the method of scientists who would deem it beneath their moral dignity to stoop to such more than questionable practices. In modern theology "hedging" and camouflage has been developed into a fine art. The writer has in mind a book on prayer whose author is a pronounced liberalist. Though he does not believe in a God who answers prayer, but holds that

---

[16] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1912, p. 311.

[17] *The Hibbert Journal,* April 1914, p. 676.

the effect of prayer is entirely subjective, he has "hedged" to such extent and with such success that many a believing Christian has read his book, never suspecting that the author speaks of prayer in an entirely new sense and that the book is quite acceptable to radical liberalists. Many theological books are published in our day which the trained reader will recognize as unorthodox, but their authors are given to the practice of "hedging." They do not commit themselves. And again there are authors who are clearly liberalistic but it is impossible to determine their own position as to the points on which they write. They may speak of such fundamental doctrines as the deity of Christ, the Incarnation, Atonement, the inspiration of Scripture. The reader is fully aware that they do not defend orthodoxy but fails to find an answer to the question what sort of "doxy" they stand for, or what they mean when they treat of the said doctrines. None other than Dean Fenn, of Harvard University, says that readers of current theological literature must often wish that every writer were obliged to furnish a glossary, explaining the meaning of the terms which he uses.[18] He adds that theological writers can hardly expect a sympathetic hearing from thoughtful men unless they are willing to let them know what they are talking about. The supreme need of modern liberalism, Dean Fenn says further, is for definite and precise thinking and direct, plain speaking.

The unvarnished fact is that a large number of theological books has been published concerning which it must be said, that it is impossible for the readers to know what the authors are talking about. And those for whom these unreal, non-committal books were written are men and

---

[18] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1913, p. 518.

women who, in their own opinion, are too far advanced in mental development to accept the doctrines of the Christian faith. Could there be more convincing proof of the superficiality and unworthiness of modern liberalistic thought. Yet it is to the very characteristic of hedging that some of the most widely used theological books owe their popularity. A British reviewer of the *Theology* by William Newton Clarke says: "In America the fashion seems to be to defend a foregone conclusion by rhetoric. This makes the reviewing of the book before us a peculiarly difficult task. It contains a great deal of what is known as 'hedging.' "[19]

From the viewpoint of general morality and common honesty theological hedging and camouflage must be unconditionally condemned. Such practices are unworthy of persons of serious purpose. A man writing a book on theology who is unwilling to commit himself and to let his readers know what he is talking about is clearly a double-minded man — a sorry figure morally. It will be recalled that our Lord unscathingly censured the Pharisees and referred to them as blind leaders of the blind. The greatest of the Pharisees, Saul of Tarsus, testifies of himself after his conversion that his Phariseeism was due to blindness. On the other hand, the modern theological hedgers who refuse to commit themselves on the greatest religious questions, are purposing in their heart, as it were, to let "the blind" go on in their way. They do not offer them light except in a negative manner. They write books on theology, yet their great care is, not to commit themselves on the points in question, but to hide their own position — if they have a position to hide. Some of them boast that

---

[19] *The Hibbert Journal,* vol. VIII, p. 210.

they are not so conceited as to think they have any knowledge about the deep religious questions.

The practice of using words and phrases in a new and unreal sense which greatly modifies or annuls the real sense, and refusing to reveal what meaning is put into these words, such a practice would not be tolerated for a moment in any other line of study. It is a characteristic feature of modern theology, a sad comment on modern religious conditions, a striking testimony to the shallowness of the spirit of the time.

A further evidence of an unsound moral attitude is found in the fact that some of the modernized seminaries not only stand for "counterfeiting" and "hedging" but they do so against the will of the churches who own and support the seminaries. Without scruple, as it seems, the new theology men, though they admit that their teaching differs radically from the old faith, are occupying property and using money designed to the maintenance and propagation of the primitive Bible faith. It will be recalled that the Unitarians were successful in the attempt to appropriate to themselves many church houses and other church property of evangelical congregations. In a similar manner liberalism has captured seminaries of orthodox Christian bodies. Mission money given by consecrated Christians for the propagation of the Gospel is used by liberalists for the purpose of modernizing the Christian converts from heathenism. All this is morally quite indefensible.

On the occasion of the publication of Professor George Burman Foster's principal work a Chicago daily newspaper made the following editorial comment on the situation in the divinity school of the University of Chicago:

> We are struck, also, with the *hypocrisy* and *treachery* of these attacks on Christianity. This is a free country and a free age, and

men can say what they choose about religion, but this is not what we arraign these divinity professors for. They are to be criticized on other grounds.

Is there no place in which to assail Christianity but a divinity school? Is there no one to write infidel books except the professors of Christian theology? Is a theological seminary an appropriate place for a general massacre of Christian doctrine? Mr. Mangasarian delivers infidel lectures every Sunday in Orchestra Hall and no one is shocked, *but when professional defenders of Christianity jump on it and assassinate it, the public—even the agnostic public —cannot but despise them.*

If the expression of these infidel sentiments by Christian teachers makes a marked and saddening impression on mature minds, how must it affect the young people in attendance at the university? These young people are not contaminated by the teachers of Spiritualism, Theosophy and free thought who abound in Chicago but when the very men whom they regard as pillars of the faith bend under them like a broken reed it is inevitable that they will leave the university *confirmed infidels.* Even so, we are not championing either Christianity or infidelity, but only *condemning infidels masquerading as men of God and Christian teachers.*

A remarkable fact deserves to be noticed here, namely that some of those who do not seem to be offended by the counterfeiting and camouflage of liberalism, insist that the old Bible faith is selfish and immoral. Dr. Herbert Alden Youtz, of Oberlin Seminary, says, for example: "Surely the time has come to insist that illiberalism and conservatism are immoral and unspiritual in a world of progress."[20] President A. C. McGiffert thinks "religion must eschew altogether its *egoistic* and otherworldly character. There can be no compromise on this point. — The religion of democracy must cease to *minister to selfishness* by promising personal salvation and must cease to impede human progress by turning the attention of religious men from

[20] *Democratizing Theology,* p. 13.

conditions here to rewards elsewhere."[21] Could it be, then, that our Lord and His apostles, by administering to the spiritual needs of men and showing them the way of personal salvation, led them in a selfish, immoral way? Or is, on the contrary, the denunciation of personal salvation a cause for the present general moral decline?

It is interesting to notice, in this connection, that the new theology rejects also the Biblical doctrine of the Atonement as immoral. It is immoral, they say, that a judge sentence one person to bear another's sins. That this is said in connection with the Atonement is due to a strange perversion of this Bible doctrine. The fact is that no one was compelled to suffer for another's sin. God himself became man in order that He might, of His own free will, bear the sin of the world. Christ is God. He became man and acted in accordance with the Father's will when He became the sin-bearer of the world. The Father, according to the eternal plan of love "laid upon Him the iniquity of us all," but He did so in accordance with the Son's own free will and plan. And mark well, the purpose of it all was to do a wonderful work of grace for those who accept the great sacrifice, namely to put away their sin and effect in them a miraculous change of heart, that henceforth they will not serve sin. To say that this greatest of all divine plans and works is of an immoral character, is to take what, for want of a more appropriate name, may be fitly called a satanic view of the Atonement. It is very peculiar, is it not? that men who defend theological counterfeiting and similar modern practices make the astonishing assertion that they consider the Biblical doctrine of the Atonement immoral. Their conscience will

---

[21] *Religious Education*, June, 1919, p. 160. Italics mine.

not permit them, they say, to accept what is in truth the greatest and most wonderful deed of a holy God. Here if anywhere the words of Paul, Rom. 1:22 are applicable.

XXV

THE NEW THEOLOGY IN THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD WAR

Professor George Burman Foster refers occasionally to "our bewildered and discouraged religious life."[1] Need it be repeated that general religious bewilderment has followed in the wake of the modern denial of Scripture authority? The confusion obtaining in liberalistic circles has been greatly aggravated by the world war. The fact is that the great war has clearly shown the unreality of the foundations of religious liberalism. As early as in the second year of the war it was predicted by liberalists that the international conflict would probably result in a loss to religious liberalism. Dr. L. P. Jacks, the editor of *The Hibbert Journal* and a representative of the new theology in England, having pointed out that religion is interpreted by the old theology in terms of *salvation*, and by the new theology in terms of *moral excellence*, said:

> It is possible that humanity may emerge from this conflict not proud of its achievements but thoroughly ashamed of itself. — In which event, all those forms of thought which rest on the postulates of moral excellence will receive a set-back, and men will fling themselves....on the grace and mercy of God. *That will be good*

[1] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion*, p. 749.

for the theology of salvation. — Man, meanwhile, is neither as wise nor as good as he thought he was. A damaging blow has been dealt at the reputation of human nature; man's self-respect is for the moment lowered.[2] — It is probable that the theology which interprets religion as the pursuit of moral excellence *will remain below the horizon for some time to come.*[3] — Who, then, can doubt that if the pursuit of moral excellence [or, in other words, the modern religious liberalism], is to turn out a success, man will have to do much better in the future than he has ever done in the past?[4]

In the opinion of Professor John Wright Buckham who represents the more advanced liberalistic school, the war has shown "with especial vividness" that liberalism "was too optimistic."[5] A Unitarian editor says:

"Another mistake that Unitarians are liable to is making religion too easy. We Unitarians are temperamentally optimists. We believe in human nature and in the progress of humanity. We have too easily assumed that evolution is an irresistable force impelling men upward whether they will or no [in other words, that religion is really a secondary matter in "our splendid cosmic climb."] *That inevitable moral advance can no longer be asserted.* Here is a great part of the world back in barbarism again, back to primitive brutalities, fears, hates, and horrors. No languid optimism is preachable in such a time as this. — Religion administered in sugar-coated pills will not cure a mad world.[5*]

Again the same writer says:

Five years ago our favorite phrases were, "The parliament of man, the federation of the world [in other words, the brother-

---

[2] *The Hibbert Journal,* October, 1915, p. 12.

[3] The same, p. 14. Our author adds a proviso: "Unless humanity redeems its character by some great act of atonement, as it conceivably may." The editoral article in the same Journal, of October, 1919, shows that Dr. Jacks is disappointed in his hope for such a thing.

[4] The same, p. 13.

[5] *Progressive Religious Thought in America,* p. 315.

[5*] *The Christian Register,* May 9, 1918.

hood of man]." With ghastly surprise we woke from "our dream of peace," to such savagery and turmoil as the world had never known. — What shall the end of these things be? Must the slumbering passions of unregenerate humanity lie forever concealed beneath a deceptive peace? Does human nature hold, as a permanent source of danger, selfish and cruel lusts that may at any time turn a peaceful landscape into a battlefield?[6]

A writer in the leading liberal church paper of Germany says:

We now know that our task is not the removal of some external imperfections on the body of humanity. No longer can we misconceive the real matter-of-fact state in all its seriousness, nor indulge in the credulous optimism which assumes that, according to the law of evoution, humanity is gradually advancing and that evil can be eliminated by a system of prudent, practical, liberalistic, social reforms in business, state and church. What help is there in merely external remedies for a body that is suffering from an internal malady?[7]

Professor Emil Pfennigsdorf, of the University of Bonn, Germany, writes:

The optimism with which we expected all salvation for humanity, as well as for the individual, to come from modern improvement and development, has proved a failure. *This is the significance of the world war.* — The powers [of darkness] which are present in the human family, have through the war come to light, have done their work and have gathered strength. The naive trust in the human spirit, which was supposed to possess redemptive power for the individual as well as for humanity, has through the war been shaken in its foundation and made untenable. We can no longer defend the view that the divine may be sufficiently found in our own consciousness. God has again become the Holy, the Mysterious, the Incomprehensible One, the Lord of the World before whom humanity is "as a drop of a bucket." In the face of the international darkness and the deep tragic of recent history, the Idealist will find himself compelled to reckon with the thought

[6] The same, March 7, 1918.

[7] *Christliche Welt,* March 11, 1920.

that a real revelation of God is needed to enable man to find Him and to obtain life through Him. Clearly irrationality and moral corruption have possession of the human being in such degree that the sufficiency of human thought can be no longer asserted. What is needed is a revelation of God which has actually taken place in history and which will with convicting power seize the human soul in its depth.[8]

Dr. Frederick Lynch, one of the delegates to the first World Conference of the Churches for International Peace, who was in Europe on the eve of the great war and witnessed the first outbreak of it, testifies that he has changed his former views of the nature of man and of the supposed need of an "easy faith." He wrote:

Another thing which we think every American of the fifty who got this first sight of war has come to feel is that our religion has broken down in its psychology, that our [liberalized] Gospel has been addressed to a man who does not exist, that our sermons have been preached to an imaginary man. We have been preaching to men as highly respectable, on the whole good, some of them saintly, while as a matter of fact this has been only seeming. They have seemed this because great temptations have not roused them from their sleep. No one who came across Europe within the last month can ever hold this easy faith again. Men are beasts; cruel, lustful, revengeful, ravening, just as the Gospel represents them. There are exceptions, but in most of us the beast lies just below the surface, and nothing but a regeneration which shall sweep through men's souls as a wind from heaven can make them clean.[9]

Dr. Richard Roberts, of the Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn, writes:

On the whole things were going on very well indeed. The old chariot of progress was forging its way bravely up the hill and presently we should arrive. Just where we were going to arrive did not seem very clear. That, however, did not matter. Wherever it was, we were getting there. — And now the chariot has been

---

[8] *Persoenlichkeit,* seventh edition, p. 30 seq.

[9] Quoted in *The Sunday School Times* of August 21, 1920.

suddenly and awfully pitched over a precipice and we are writhing at its foot in blood and tears. We had said complacently that the "ape and tiger" were at the point of death; behold they have turned upon us and are rending us to pieces. The moral tragedy of the world is being enacted in a muddy, bloody horror before our eyes, and our little fantastic dreams of progress are looking very futile and cheap over against this vast catastrophe. This war is the greatest revelation of the moral perversity of man since Calvary. — The one thing we cannot do after this is to belittle sin or explain it away.[10] — The history which has culminated in the present catastrophe vindicates beyond a peradventure the New Testament diagnosis of our human distemper, and it leaves us no room for hope save in the New Testament remedy. In the place of the futilities of a genial culture gospel we must bring to the world again the power and the hope of a conversion gospel.[11]

These confessions of liberalistic writers are of great significance. They show that the world war has, in the opinion of these writers, proved the erroneousness of the most fundamental teachings of religious liberalism; in other words, they are confessions to the bankruptcy of the new theology. The great war is unanswerable proof that, despite the belief in man's natural goodness and in the world as God's kingdom; despite the "genial culture gospel" of social and moral improvement, of education and material advancement, the nature of the world has not changed. The world is, in the final analysis, as antagonistic to true Christianity as ever it was. The advance of civilization has given the world a pleasing veneer, but has not changed its heart. Liberalistic leaders now confess openly, as we have seen, that, in the light of the great war, their own gospel of moral and social advancement is not adequate to the great need of the human heart and of the world. Some of them admit now that a supernatural

---

[10] *The Biblical World,* November, 1918, p. 281.

[11] The same, p. 286.

revelation of God is needed and that no other remedy for human sin will suffice than the New Testament remedy: a divine work of grace in the human heart.

Now liberalism does not have these things to offer. To say that they are needed is to confess that the new theology is fundamentally mistaken. This means that liberalism is confessing to its own inner collapse, its bankruptcy. On the other hand it means also that there never was so opportune a time to show the true character of liberalism and to spread the New Testament message, as the present.

XXVI

THE INEFFICIENCY OF RELIGIOUS LIBERALISM

We have in recent years heard much about the waning influence and inefficiency of the church. The cause is often said to be her unmodernism, the conservatism of her creed. Many liberal writers have asserted that the church is doomed if she persists to stand for Biblical orthodoxy. The way and the only way to save the church, we are told, is to open her gates to the modern liberalism, the new theology. This is the view generally held in liberalistic circles, as could be easily shown by quotations, were it not quite well known.

So much more remarkable is the fact that not a few liberalistic writers frankly admit the inefficiency of the religious liberalism as compared with the old Bible faith. The new theology has in fact been tried out by the Unitarians and others and has proved a failure. It has not brought to the church the promised prosperity but has brought inefficiency and decay. So well known is this fact to those who have made investigation that it cannot be ignored by the representatives of liberalism. Some of them have, as already intimated, admitted it in their writings. A number

of new theology writers are here quoted on the subject under consideration.

Dr. Douglas Clyde Macintosh, of Yale University, admits freely that "the old Christianity was positive and vital," while the message of religious liberalism "has been predominantly negative." "But mere negation," he says further, "is not enough," denial alone will not suffice.[1] In an article, written jointly by a few of the professors of the University of Chicago, the confession is made: "That there are undeniable losses in the departure from orthodoxy ought to be recognized."[2] Dr. W. H. P. Faunce, of Brown University, says: "Under the old theology there was a spirit of reverence and obedience now often totally lacking."[3] Professor Gerald Birney Smith, of the University of Chicago, writes: "Precisely those people, whose thoughtfulness and conscientious intelligence are imperatively needed in the work of the church, are also painfully aware that as yet nothing of a strong positive character has come to take the place of the older type of theology."[4] Professor Durant Drake, of Vassar College, makes this confession: "But if we are candid, we must admit that upon its constructive side [liberal] theology has less to show. We can raise far more problems than we can solve; and we know far less about the great enigmas than men once thought they knew. The situation is far from satisfactory."[4*] "We have discarded the old piety," this author says further, "but have not worked out new methods to produce the type of char-

---

[1] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1914, page 554.
[2] The same, 1913, page 97.
[3] The same, 1916, page 338.
[4] The same, 1912, page 606.
[4*] *Problems of Religion,* page 413.

acter we want."[5] Again this author says: "We have not found out how to develop piety in the new way."[6] President McGiffert speaks of our liberalistic time as "this time of confusion. and upheaval."[7]

Professor Edward Caldwell Moore raises the questions: "Why do traditionalists [conservatives] often fail of religious effectiveness? Why, however, do progressives [speaking of liberalists] fail still more often?"[8] The same writer admits the fact that "the liberal movement in the nineteenth century illustrates often *the disintegrating and devastating effects of liberalism.*"[9] Under new theology influences, he says further, "there has been less evidence of this consuming anxiety for the spiritual life of man, less of this moving instinct of responsibility, less of the spirit of that outgoing care for souls which quickens men to ardent adventure and puts them upon heroism and self-sacrifice."[10] In another instance Professor Moore says: "If there is always to be a superiority of Christian devotion, of a zeal for God and love of man, on the side of the conservatives; if there is always to be a religious inferiority of liberals, then it will still be to the conservatives that we shall owe the best of the world's work."[11]

Professor George Albert Coe, of Union Theological Seminary, says: "Liberalism makes for ethical clarity and breadth, but it easily fails of ethical fervor."[12] And again:

---

[5] *Religious Education,* 1919, page 313.
[6] *The Christian Register,* March 27, 1919, page 10.
[7] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1911, page 3.
[8] The same, 1912, page 4.
[9] The same, page 5.
[10] The same, page 11.
[11] The same, 1913, page 25.
[12] *A Social Theory of Religious Education,* p. 340.

"The very narrowness of dogmatism seems at times to produce religious intensity that has power with men, whereas the liberal thinker tends not seldom to become an onlooker rather than a doer."[13]

Only the conservative theologians, says the liberalistic thinker, Professor G. Santayana, of Harvard University, "have anything to say to the poor, or to the rich, that can refresh them." This writer points out that in a frank supernaturalism "lies the sole hope of the Church." "Its sole dignity also lies there," he says further. "As to modernism, it is suicide [for the church]. It is the last of those concessions to the spirit of the world which half-believers and double-minded prophets have always been found making; but it is a mortal concession. It concedes everything, for it concedes that everything in Christianity, as Christians hold it, is an illusion."[14] "The modern liberalistic view," the same writer confesses, "takes the seriousness out of religion; it sweetens the pang of sin which becomes misfortune; it steals the empirical reality away from the last judgment, from hell and from heaven; it steals historical reality away from the Christ of religious tradition and personal devotion." [15]

The late Professor George Burman Foster, of the University of Chicago, in the preface to a volume in which he questions or denies every one of the Christian fundamentals, makes the remarkable confession that he does not desire this book to fall into the hands of those who yet cling to the old faith. "I could wish with all my heart," he says further, "that our fathers and mothers might enjoy the blessed calm of the evening life free from the spiritual bewilder-

---

[13] The same, p. 336.

[14] *Winds of Doctrine,* 1913, p. 56.

[15] The same, page 5.

ment of those who have to wander in the region of doubt and to feel their feet slip just when they thought that some rock on which they stood was firm." This author admits that "the full and solid comfort and hope which warmed the hearts and illuminated the faces of the fathers" is now absent. He tells us that he has simply endeavored in this volume "to cleave to the sunnier side of doubt." In conclusion he expresses the wish that "there may *be light and warmth enough to keep us from freezing in the dark.*"[16] Strange as it may seem, Professor Foster in the same book lauds doubt to the skies as one of the greatest assets to religious life.[17] He wrote this book in 1909 and his later writings show that in more recent years he came to the conclusion that religious assurance ("a rock on which we could stand firm") is neither possible nor needful to find.

Professor Thomas N. Carver, of Harvard University, in an article, *What Ails the Church?* points out that the impotence of the liberal church is due to "the loss of a definite, soul-compelling purpose or program." He says further:

> Formerly the church knew exactly what it was for; now it does not seem quite certain. Then there was no wavering; now those churches which are not merely drifting are running around in a circle looking for some "cause" to espouse, or something vaguely called "social service" to perform. Then the church preached a clear and definite gospel of salvation, with damnation as the unattractive alternative; now it is not considered quite polite in the best religious circles to mention damnation, and, since there is nothing very definite to be saved from, salvation has lost its meaning. If the [liberal] church had a definite, soul-compelling purpose, we should find the liberal churches either progressing, or at least decaying less

---

[16] *The Function of Religion in Man's Struggle for Existence*, 1909. Italics mine.

[17] The same, page 133.

rapidly than the more narrowly orthodox churches. *But the opposite is the case.*[18]

An object lesson as to the effect which the acceptance of the new theology has on the prosperity and efficiency of the church, is presented by the church of Germany. Besides its many liberalistic pastors Germany had a few years before the war 120,000 teachers giving religious instruction in public schools who declared themselves to be ardent defenders of the modern religious liberalism. Notwithstanding these facts the church in Germany had been fast losing ground, not only among the educated but also the laboring classes. The latter, even before the war, had been largely won for atheistic socialism. A liberal theologian of Nuremberg, Germany, Dr. Rittelmeyer, said in 1910 in an article treating on the effect of the new theology on the efficiency of the church:

If we honestly inquire into the question as to the practical effects of modern theology, we must admit that the masses of the working people, counting millions, do not appreciate the church. Not only do they, at least as far as Germany is concerned, distrust the church but they refuse to have anything to do with it. And how about the educated classes? We have long made a hobby of the endeavor to win those who are supposed to be alienated and estranged because they consider the church too conservative. But what are the actual results? True, there are those who acknowledge that modern theology alone has enabled them to remain in the church. But how insignificantly small is the number of these.

What is the cause of the failure? Wherein consists the weakness of advanced theological thought? The answer is, modern theology is the child of criticism. It may be rightfully said that it is of a negative character. We can readily understand the complaint of the orthodox who say: "One thing after the other is doubted and rejected and eliminated. Farther and farther goes this process of

---

[18] *The Harvard Theological Review,* 1915, page 381 f. Italics mine.

disintegration. What will remain in the end?" — Modern theology is lacking, not only in distinctiveness of its message, but in regenerating power which the old faith really had. —Jesus is for us not the Saviour of the world and Redeemer of mankind, as he is for orthodoxy.

A Unitarian writer observes: "Some people say the religious liberal is often more liberal than religious. *Why is this true?* One reason is that he has lost interest in the old forms of religion without gaining enthusiasm for the new."[19] The editor of the Unitarian organ says: "*There is far deeper conviction among the people who stand fast in the old order of doctrine than there is among those in the new.*"[19†] Professor William Adams Brown, of Union Theological Seminary, New York, writes:

> What is to become, we are asked, of Sunday-observance, church-going, family worship, the habit of Bible reading and of daily prayer, if no firmer basis can be provided for their support than the generalities of the new theology? And we ourselves, when we consider the easy-going religion which is all about us, often share this feeling, and wish now and again that we could recover the unquestioning faith of an earlier age, even at the price of some of its intolerance and narrowness.[20]

Professor Albert Parker Fitch, of Amherst College, observes: "The great failure of the new age was and is that it has not yet found, or at any rate not whole-heartedly accepted any adequate substitute [for the old theology]." This writer realizes that many who have discarded the older religious views "practically annihilate the distinction between good and evil and abandon themselves to a sort of emotional chaos and moral sentimentalism. Such extreme individualism is common and lamentable enough."[21]

---

[19] *The Christian Register,* July 8, 1920, p. 19.

[19†] The same, January 6, 1921, p. 3. Italics mine.

[20] *The Harvard Theological Review,* January, 1911, p. 17.

[21] *Can the Church Survive?* p. 72.

Clearly religious liberalism, having not yet found an acceptable substitute for the old faith, is in a bad way. Small wonder that liberalists speak of "our bewildered and discouraged religious life."[22] What a contrast between the old Christian faith and the modern liberalistic religion expressing the pious hope that "there may be light and warmth enough to keep us from freezing in the dark."

The question is here in order, if fair-minded liberalists confess to the weakness and inefficiency of religious liberalism, why do they prefer it to the old Bible faith? Why do they not discard it? Their answer is that the modern mind is unwilling to accept the supernatural Christian faith. Modernism, then, recognizes the power and efficiency of the old faith but rejects it on the supposition that it is unreasonable. We are asked to believe that an inefficient faith is more reasonable than the one that is efficient. The Bible faith, we are told, is void of a sound foundation. It is difficult to see, on the other hand, that the modern liberalistic religion, which disowns the inspiration and authority of Scripture, has any foundation that is worthy of the name. In the final analysis its foundation is found to be of a character making it unacceptable to those who do their own thinking.

---

[22] *A Guide to the Study of the Christian Religion,* p. 749.

XXVII

THE FAILURE OF UNITARIANISM

The Unitarians derive their name from their denial of the trinity of God and of the deity of Christ. The early history of the American Unitarian Church is an illustration to the addage that truth is stranger than fiction. Early in the last century Unitarian teaching gained a foothold in Harvard College, the institution in which at that time the ministers for the Congregational churches in eastern Massachusetts were trained. In consequence Harvard College turned out ministerial candidates that were theologically unsound. To provide for the training of orthodox Congregational ministers Andover Seminary was established, in 1807. Though Unitarianism found its way into some of the congregations, the majorities in the congregations were almost without exception orthodox. Now the Unitarian leaders, instead of advising the liberalistic minorities in the congregations to secede from the Congregational Church and organize themselves, claimed the right of imposing ministers of their own persuasion upon the orthodox majorities.

The story of how the liberalistic leaders succeeded in this endeavor constitutes a dark chapter in ecclesiastical history. They found, on the statue books of the state of Massachusetts, an old law which, in their opinion, gave

the parish — or the population of a town — the right to elect the minister for the church. As a rule the majority of the population were liberal in sentiment. Hence the Unitarians hoped that, with the assistance of the liberal outsiders, they could obtain control of the church. The said law is as follows: "The several towns, parishes, precincts, and other bodies politic, or religious societies, shall at all times have the exclusive right of electing their public teachers and of contracting with them for their support and maintenance." It is worthy of notice that this law distinguishes between parishes and religious societies. Evidently it gives churches the exclusive right to elect their public teachers, or ministers. Before the enactment of this law there were older laws in force which made it possible for the Legislature of the state to impose ministers of their own choice upon a church; it was for this reason — namely to make void the older laws — that the said law was enacted. The phrase "exclusive right" refers to the right of religious and political societies, and means exclusive of the Legislature. Now the unheard-of meaning was read into it that the parish, or the population of a town, *exclusive of the church,* had the right to elect the minister for the church.

On the strength of this law, or rather of that curious interpretation of it, the parish, — the legal voters — of the town of Dedham, Mass., called, in 1818, the Unitarian Alvan Lamson as minister of the First Congregational Church, in spite of the protests of two-thirds of the church. They also called a council of Unitarians to ordain him. Significantly enough, the council which performed the ordination included President Kirkland of Harvard College, Henry Ware, the most prominent theological professor of Harvard, William Ellery Channing, of Boston, a noted

Unitarian theologian, and other Unitarians of prominence, indicating that the Unitarian leaders accepted the new interpretation of the said law. Thereupon the orthodox majority of the church at Dedham seceded, leaving the church house to the minority. Not satisfied with this, however, the Unitarians now also claimed the endowments of the church. The case being taken to the courts, a decision was given in their favor. This decision formed a precedent for all subsequent action in many other Congregational churches. In October, 1820, the Supreme Court whose judges were of the Unitarian persuasion,[1] decided that a church had no legal existence and no legal rights whatever, except if supported by the parish, i. e. by the legal voters of a town, hence an orthodox majority in a church must give up their property rights to a Unitarian minority, if the latter were backed by a majority of the legal voters. In case the whole church be orthodox, the parish (if the liberals were a majority in it) could, in the opinion of the Court, claim all the rights of the church including the property rights, for "to all legal purposes the secession of the whole church from the parish [!] would be the extinction of the church," and a church that might afterwards be organized with the consent of the parish would succeed to the name and property of the seceded orthodox church. In consequence of this action of the Supreme Court eighty-one Congregational churches, not a few of them with rich endowments, were turned over to the Unitarians.

"The orthodox majorities were indignant," says Professor J. W. Platner, "because property and rights were seen passing into the legal possession of minorities, a transaction which seemed to them to violate every inherited prin-

[1] Bacon, *The Congregationalists*, p. 183.

ciple of fair play. They believed the action taken under the court's ruling was little short of *legalized plunder.*"[2] Dean Fenn, of Harvard University, writes: "The conservatives were willing, be it said to their glory, to forfeit the accumulation of years, to labor and sacrifice in the upbuilding of new churches which should perpetuate the ancient creed."[3]

As regards the doctrinal position of the early Unitarians, it should be noted, first of all, that they believed the doctrine of the sinfulness of man to be a mere figment of the imagination and a source of evil. They were of the opinion that a great moral reformation would result from the rejection of the Biblical doctrine of sin and the acceptance of the idea of inherent human goodness. The time was at had, they said, when the Christian church, in order to enjoy prosperity, must preach "the rectitude and dignity of human nature," making supernatural salvation superfluous. At any rate those who were born in Boston and vicinity, so the common humorous saying was, had no need to be born again. The fact is, the Unitarians teach that regeneration is not needed to implant the divine life, nor is divine grace needed for the development of such life.

Dr. Samuel A. Eliot, the President of the American Unitarian Association, has, with the co-operation of another Unitarian minister, written an article in which he says, not only Christianity but "all religions have this [essential] religion of the spirit."[4] From this statement it might be inferred that, in order to be saved, it is, in his opinion, necessary to accept some religion, be it Christianity or an-

---

[2] *The Religious History of New England,* p. 62.

[3] The same, p. 111.

[4] Article *Unitarians,* in *The New International Encyclopedia.*

other religious system. This is not Dr. Eliot's view, however. The Unitarian Church teaches that the natural religion which every person possesses is sufficient for salvation. According to Unitarianism the divine is naturally in man, even the most degraded and depraved, and it may be developed by natural means, just as the oak is developed from the acorn. If it remains undeveloped, the loss is not great, for he is saved nevertheless. Therefore, when Dr. Eliot says that "all religions have this religion of the spirit," he does not mean that persons who do not formally adhere to any religion are devoid of the religion of the spirit.

As for sin, it does not figure large in Unitarian, or in general liberalistic teaching. The acceptance of the idea of God's immanence takes away its sting. Sin does not really matter much. "We do not know what to do with sin," said a speaker in a Unitarian convention held in Philadelphia a few years ago. Since the Unitarian Church teaches that "all men are God's children," there is no need of a Savior. A good example, such as Jesus gave us, is desirable, but it is not essential. The idea of the supernatural is rejected. As for the immortality of the soul, the Unitarian Church is on this point, as on all other doctrinal points, strictly neutral. As a church they do not teach that the soul survives the death of the body. "Unitarianism is belief in the humanity of God and the divinity of man," as one of the official statements of Unitarian teachings has it.[5]

"The first and most fundamental characteristic of Unitarianism is that it is an undogmatic church," says Professor Christie, of the Unitarian seminary at Meadville, Pa.;

---

[5] *Declaration of Belief of Western Unitarian Churches*, adopted May 19, 1887.

"it is a church without a creed and without official theology."[6] And again this writer says: "The Unitarians have no creed and exclude no one from fellowship because of doctrinal opinions."[7] This means that doctrinally the Unitarians do not take any position. To them any doctrine is acceptable so long as it is not believed to be essential or accepted as a creed. There is, practically, only one exception to this statement. The Unitarians are not kindly disposed to the old evangelical faith. They devote their energies to combating Biblical orthodoxy. Provided, however, that the old faith is discarded, they believe as a church, that nothing really matters in the way of doctrine. It has sometimes been supposed that Unitarians have a creed, since some of their conferences are agreed on the idea of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. But their own assertion that they are a creedless church is evidently correct. In fact, there are Unitarians who do not believe in a personal God; hence to them the phrase "God's fatherhood" has no real meaning. Some of the Unitarian ministers teach rank atheism.[8]

The Unitarian message does not materially differ from that of religious liberalism in general. It is of a negative character, a denial of the Christian truth. The content of the message of modern liberalism is, as we have seen, that all men are divine, whether or not they desire to be, and do not need vital salvation. In other words, liberalism teaches that neither Christianity nor any other religious system has an essential message of salvation, and no such message is needed. Unitarian preachers, as well as liber-

---

[6] *The American Journal of Theology,* 1917, p. 554.

[7] *United States Census Report. Religious Bodies;* 1906, Part 2, p. 841.

[8] Compare pp. 75, 82 and 264 of the present book.

alists who are not identified with the Unitarians, have boasted that they are not so narrow as to think that what they preach is essentially better than the ideas of those who differ from them (provided they be not orthodox Christians). Indeed to advance the opinion that there is no vital difference between Biblical and non-Biblical religious teaching is the only consistent position for those who deny the inspiration of Scripture and do not claim to have an authoritative message from God. But the fact cannot be ignored that a church taking such an attitude necessarily makes the impression of being run for the purpose of apologizing for its own existence. A Unitarian minister writes:

> Lacking sadly the goodness of the Bible type, we are resorting to all sorts of material devices to inform people who are not the least interested in what we are doing or in what we propose to do, that we are in existence, and that if they do not help to fill our depleted ranks we must soon go out of existence. *All these measures to revive a dying church would be comical were they not so tragical.*[9]

"In the absence of some kind of doctrine of salvation," says Professor Thomas N. Carver, of Harvard University, "Christian work has lost its definite meaning; it means little more than to persuade people to join the Church." Again Professor Carver says: "This perpetual program for membership [without a message of salvation] brings the church under that class of organisms whose energy is all expended in keeping alive in trying to save their own life. Such an organism ought to die, and in a rational universe it must eventually die."[10] Since, according to the declaration of a Unitarian conference, "the progress of mankind is onward and upward forever," the task of the church

---

[9] *The Christian Register,* August 26, 1920, p. 13. Italics mine.
[10] *The Harvard Theological Review,* 1915, p. 384f.

is, to all appearances, not a serious one, so much the less as Unitarians, with other religious liberalists believe that Jesus never founded a church. The Unitarians do not look upon the church as a distinct spiritual covenanted body, but rather as nothing more than a society. Significantly the editor of *The Christian Register* says, the *Register* is not only the organ of the members of the Unitarian Church, but of "the increasing thousands of liberals in every other denomination in Christendom, and of course *in other faiths besides.* — And we are mindful of the perhaps even largest number of all who for reasons sufficient unto their own hearts are outside any church or religious body. All these are our normal constituency."[11] Taking such facts into consideration it is plausible that James Freeman Clarke, the noted liberalistic historian, could rightfully say: "The Unitarian churches of Boston see no reason for diffusing their faith. They treat it as a luxury to be kept for themselves....I have heard it said that they do not wish to make Unitarianism too common."[12] "Perhaps no churches have shown less sense of responsibility for the population of a given precinct," says Dr. L. W. Bacon.[13] Ralph Waldo Emerson, a leader of Unitarian thought, once referred to Unitarianism as *"an ice chest."*[14]

Concerning the favorable conditions which marked the beginnings of the Unitarian Church in America, Dr. George E. Ellis, a Unitarian theologian and author, says the Unitarians from the beginning were confident that before fifty years should have passed "orthodoxy would have become a thing of the past while Unitarianism would be the pre-

---

[11] *The Christian Register,* October 31, 1918. Italics mine.

[12] Bacon, *The Congregationalists,* 1904, p. 251.

[13] The same, p. 173.

[14] *The Harvard Theological Review,* 1918, p. 304.

vailing type of religion."[15] Dr. L. W. Bacon, in *The Story of the Churches,* writes:

Never in all the course of church history has a new religious movement started with so magnificent a send-off as this. The venerable college at Cambridge was under its control. Besides the church buildings, productive funds for religious uses amounting, it was estimated, to $600,000 [a very large sum at that time] were in its possession. The wealth, culture, and social influence of Boston were Unitarian. The Unitarian clergy list was such a roster of splendid names as no clergy of like number in Christendom could show. There was much to justify the prophecy that was uttered that the Unitarians would presently become the prevailing form of American Christianity.[16]

Never prophets proved more sadly mistaken than those who predicted that the Unitarians would outdistance the other denominations. The Unitarian Church never showed real vitality. It has remained numerically weak and today has the unmistakable evidences of anæmia and decay. As early as the year 1839, the Unitarian leader Dr. W. E. Channing wrote: "I would that I could look to Unitarianism with more hope. But this system, being a protest against certain dogmas, rather than the work of deep religious principle, was early paralyzed by the mixture of material philosophy and fell too much into the hands of scholars and political reformers, and the consequence is a lack of vitality and force."[17]

The Unitarians have no foreign mission work. In the home land they are carrying on a work of literature distribution, devoting the income of a fund of about a million dollars to this purpose. Hundreds of thousands of booklets and tracts are annually sent free to those who desire

---

[15] Dunning, *Congregationalists in America,* 1894, p. 302.
[16] *The Story of the Churches,* 1904, p. 170.
[17] The same, p. 316.

to read them, and space is bought in newspapers for the dissemination of Unitarian teachings. In this way not a few members of other denominations have been won for liberalism. "Unitarians have been reproached," says the editor of the leading Unitarian paper, "because their membership is largely made up of those who were formerly of another persuasion."[18] However, it is by no means the case that all who, through Unitarian influence, accept the liberalistic position and renounce their membership in evangelical churches, cast their lot with the Unitarian Church. Evidently many religious liberals, including the great majority of those who were brought up in Unitarian families, are of the opinion that a position of general doctrinal indifferentism and neutrality makes the existence of the church superfluous. The average man who accepts the Unitarian message fails to see a valid purpose for a church and hence does not join the Unitarian connection. It is a significant fact that, as already said, Unitarians fail to win the great majority of their own children for their society.

A noted Unitarian minister, Dr. Charles E. Park, observes that there is in the Unitarian Church "a predominance of gray heads and noticeable lack of young people."[19] Again a writer in *The Christian Register* says, " 'The Unitarian Church is the church of the mature mind and confirmed heart.' This was the reply of a Unitarian minister to the question as to why there are so few young people in our church."[20] Another writer in the same periodical, referring to the Unitarian denomination, speaks of "*our anæ-*

---

[18] *The Christian Register,* August 14, 1919, p. 3.

[19] The same, June 5, 1919, p. 5.

[20] The same, November 13, 1919, p. 5.

mia and our slow dying rate."[21] Again a writer in the same paper, a Unitarian minister, says: "The fact that our church is dying has frightened us into nervous activity which might well be directed toward a search for the cause."[22]

If we raise the question of the deeper causes of Unitarian inefficiency, and decay, we find some striking answers in the leading Unitarian organ. A writer in this paper says: "When Unitarians develop an evangelism which sends out preachers and teachers, exhorters and inspirers, that can drive home conviction of sin and can awaken the sense of moral responsibility, we will start to grow."[23] Another writer in the periodical just mentioned says: "Instead of considering theology of such negligible importance that God must be referred to from the pulpit in only the most general terms, ought we not value it as a normal stimulus to mental and spiritual growth?"[24] And the editor of the same paper writes: "All the Sunday lectures on economics, sociology, labor parties, single tax, poetry and the Bolsheviki are not to be compared with those innermost questions of the spirit which have made theology the queen of sciences."[25] And again: "Do we know that a church is as strong as its theology?"[26] Another writer in the Unitarian organ is of the opinion that the decay of Unitarianism can not be remedied by publicity and organization alone; in his view "*there is something lacking in our gospel*

---

[21] The same, March 21, 1918, p. 2. Italics mine.
[22] The same, September 2, 1920, p. 9.
[23] The same, April 11, 1918, p. 7.
[24] The same, November 27, 1919, p. 12.
[25] The same, March 21, 1918, p. 2.
[26] The same, April 15, 1920, p. 2.

itself."[27] Again the Unitarian editor has in another instance the following to say:

> This whole subject of theology is of transcendent interest and importance. We should rejoice if our readers would warm up to a searching, good-tempered, persistent discussion of doctrinal matters. The need among thoughtful people in our churches of just this thing is almost pitiable. Nothing is more crying. Theology is the articulation of religion, and we must have it or die spiritually. "The religion of the inarticulate" is pure nonsense. We have got to put it in clear-cut words.[28]

Now this is an interesting situation. Representative men in the Unitarian Church come out with the open confession that the great need for Unitarians is a theology. They believe a theology is absolutely essential to the life and prosperity of a church. Yet, there is abundant proof that the Unitarians as a church do not have a theology. The very essence of the Unitarian position, and of liberalism in general, is, in fact, that doctrine and theology are so unimportant that every man should be considered a law unto himself in such matters and the church should not stand for a particular theology. Religion, they say, "is a thing which exists independently of definite theological doctrines." And is it not a fair assumption that the Unitarian editor, since he recognizes the weakness of a church without a theology, might make his paper of some service in that direction to its constituency? But the *Christian Register* is, by its own confession, an organ of religious liberalists both within and without the ranks of nominal Christendom. This paper publishes articles defending the baldest atheism. In an editorial review of a book in which theology is regarded as rather of the nature of astrology — superstition — the *Christian Register* said: "It is for hold-

---

[27] The same, September 2, 1920, p. 9.

[28] The same, March 20, 1919, p. 5.

ing precisely the views here set forth that Unitarians have been denied Christian name and fellowship."[29]

What is here said about the message and teaching of Unitarianism applies equally to religious liberalism in general, as advocated by some of the leading theological seminaries of America. This is a fact that is generally recognized by Unitarians. The President of the American Unitarian Association says: "Unitarianism means the system of religion of certain churches and individuals whose Christianity is of the liberal type."[30] Professor Francis A. Christie writes: "The modernism of theological view professed by Unitarians is sometimes indistinguishable from the modernism permitted in other Christian groups, and the necessity of a separate organization [such as the Unitarian Church] considered as a protest against older theological views, is often disputed [by liberals in evangelical churches]."[31] And the Unitarian editor says: "In all of the orthodox denominations there is a liberal wing in which the theological difference between them and us is almost nothing."[32] "It would take a microscopic analysis to discern the difference between some of the liberals in evangelical churches and the Unitarians," says *Zion's Herald*.

Some of the Unitarian leaders have expressed their grievance that men who advocate Unitarian teaching stick to evangelical churches. Others again believe, and indeed rightfully, that the cause of liberalism is served better if the liberals stay in these churches "and reform them from

---

[29] The same, February 20, 1919. The book here mentioned is *The New Orthodoxy*, by Professor Ames, of the University of Chicago.

[30] *The New International Encyclopedia*, Article "Unitarianism."

[31] *The American Journal of Theology*, 1917, p. 554.

[32] *The Christian Register*, April 15, 1920.

within," as a liberalistic writer expresses himself. Former President Taft, a member of the Unitarian Church, said in a public address: "The one trouble we suffer from — if it be a trouble — is that there are so many Unitarians in other churches. They are one with us in faith but do not sit in the pews of our Church. But that means that they [the other churches] are coming to us." Without question Ex-President Taft is right. Religious liberalism within the evangelical churches is a far more serious danger to the Biblical faith than without. Decidedly, a foe from within is the greater menace. It should be added that many liberal ministers in evangelical denominations have united with the Unitarians, only to be disappointed in the hope of success under the banners of outspoken liberalism. A prominent Unitarian writer testifies that "sixty per cent of those who enter our ministry from other denominations, leave it,"[33] to engage in some other occupation, finding obviously, the liberal ministry an unsatisfactory calling. This fact is the more noteworthy, as the majority of Unitarian preachers were formerly ministers in evangelical churches.

The question suggests itself, How is it to be accounted for that evangelical churches whose ministers preach Unitarian doctrine, continue in some instances to show a growth and prosperity unknown in organized Unitarianism? The answer is obvious. There are those who will unite with an evangelical church that has a liberal minister, but would not do so if the denomination in question were officially committed to liberalism. Many are of the opinion that the preaching of the new theology from pulpits of evangelical churches is a passing phenomenon and that the churches after all stand for the old theology.

[33] The same, October 23, 1919, p. 6.

The New Theology comes to us with great pretensions. The old evangelical faith, so we are told, has outlived its usefulness. A new theology is needed which, by eliminating the supernatural, will make the Christian religion acceptable to the modern mind and thus save the church from (supposed) utter failure and insure her continued prosperity. Now in the light of the history and present condition of Unitarianism it must be said that these pretentious claims cannot be taken seriously. The Unitarians have tried out the modern liberalism. It has utterly failed to bring efficiency and prosperity to the church. While they have influenced multitudes toward discarding the Christian faith, they have not succeeded in the effort to persuade many of them to support an undogmatic church. So prominent a Unitarian leader as Professor Christie says: "As an undogmatic church Unitarianism is conducting a great historic experiment."[34] In other words, Unitarianism is, after a century of effort and unparalleled opportunity, still in the experimental stage. It is conducting an experiment to ascertain whether an undogmatic religious society can be successfully established. And what a costly experiment the fight against the truth of the Gospel has proved! As for the Christian Church, it never had an experimental stage. It was from the very beginning engaged in the great work of saving souls and rendering to them service for their Christian life.

The history of organized religious liberalism — within as well as without the Unitarian connection — offers an interesting field to the religious student. It affords unanswerable proof that the liberalization of Protestantism means its disintegration.

---

[34] *The American Journal of Theology*, October, 1917, p. 554.

XXVIII

THE CHASM BETWEEN THE OLD AND THE NEW THEOLOGY

It is peculiarly interesting to notice that religious liberalism seems to be unable to understand the position of those who believe that the Christian faith was once for all delivered to the saints through divine revelation. Of the inability, on the part of liberals, to understand the old faith there is a great deal of evidence.

New theology writers say, for example, the old faith has no other foundation than the authority of the theologians or of the church. They tell us that conservatives, instead of asking, "What is true?" ask, "What is authorized?" But the thought that the church, or the theologians, may on their own authority defend a religious doctrine, is, as intelligent people usually know, contrary to orthodox teaching and considered offensive in evangelical Christendom. Need it be said that he who recognizes the Bible as God's Word, accepts its teachings as true, not as merely humanly authorized doctrines concerning which it is not known whether they be true or not? Is it not an insult to say of the conservatives that instead of asking, "What is true?" they ask, "What is authorized?"

Again representatives of the new theology say, they cannot accept the Biblical doctrine of salvation. They advance the view that salvation in the Bible sense is of a

selfish — sinful — character. A number of writers have said, salvation must be socially interpreted and, unless God will save all mankind, their moral nature will not permit them to consent to their own personal salvation. The desire and willingness to be personally saved, they say, is rooted in selfishness. Mark well, we are asked by liberalistic theologians to accept the opinion that to do the will of God, as Scripture requires, and seek personal salvation, is selfishness. If this were correct, it would follow that He whom we serve is not the God who has revealed Himself in Scripture but is a being who delights in selfishness and sin. Has there ever been heard a more miserable falsification than the assertion that salvation, such as Christ and the apostles preached, is grounded in selfishness? Is not, on the contrary, the acceptance of the old Gospel and the personal experience and realization of salvation the only true antidote to selfishness?

One of the fundamental Christian principles is the futility of self-effort in the realm of the true inner Christian life. The sinner seeking salvation must come to the place where he realizes that he cannot be his own savior; his own effort availeth nothing; he must be willing to surrender himself and take salvation as a free gift of grace. The same principle holds good in every other phase of the true spiritual life. The greatest need for growth in grace and for the continuation of conscious Christian experience on the part of the believer is the deep realization of the worthlessness of self-effort, and the desire that the self-life should cease. Mark well, this does not mean indifference or indolence, but the very opposite. This principle is emphasized in Scripture. Our Lord has taught that self, or the self-life should be denied, that without Him we can do nothing, that the branch must draw life from the vine,

that to the poor in spirit is the kingdom of heaven, that "my strength is made perfect in weakness." And Paul says: "When I am weak, then am I strong" (II Cor. 12:10), and again: "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Now this principle is a rock of offence to representatives of liberal religion. For illustration: A Unitarian editor refers to an article in *The Sunday School Times* as "amazingly harmful stuff." In this article it was shown that "God's provision for a Spirit-filled life is just a provision for people who recognize their weakness and who have no illusion as to their strength." Commenting on this, the Unitarian editor says: "Such exegesis is a crime."[1]

Furthermore it has been said of various representatives of liberalism that those who hold to the old faith do not regard salvation as a reality for this world but for another — not as a present reality but as something to take place in another world. Now it is true that, considered from the viewpoint of liberalism, salvation in any true sense is out of the question, for the good reason that the Savior is denied. When, however, liberalists tell us that for those also who personally accept the old Gospel message there is no salvation in this life, they are making a rather curious assertion. He who realizes salvation as a blessed present reality, having in Christ a daily living, present, satisfying Savior — to such an one the said assertion of liberalism is absurd.

The fact remains, then, that representatives of religious liberalism find themselves unable to understand and appre-

---

[1] *The Christian Register*, August 19, 1920, p. 3.

ciate the old Biblical truth. Of the things that are the essence of the Christian life and Christian truth they speak as the blind speak of the colors. Even the most precious truth of the atonement through Christ they regard as morally objectionable[2]. In the midst of a land of Bibles they find themselves in dense spiritual darkness.

Dr. Francis Landey Patton, former President of Princeton Theological Seminary, has well said: "The only hope of Christianity is in the rehabilitating of the Pauline theology. It is back, back, back to an incarnate Christ and the atoning blood, or it is on, on, on to atheism and despair." It would be useless to deny that the liberalizing and modernizing of theology has inherent atheistic tendencies; in fact, the full-fledged modernization of theology, as represented by the more advanced type of religious liberalism, demanding the democratization of God, is atheism. Evidence for this statement has been given elsewhere. Only recently a Unitarian editor published, under the title *Modernizing two Basic Beliefs*, an article discussing a book in which the beliefs in God and immortality are radically denied, and such denial is spoken of as modernizing these doctrines.[3] Modernizing the faith is, in the language of liberalism, denying the faith.

Liberalists tell us that intellectual difficulties stand in the way of accepting the old Bible faith. Considered from the world's viewpoint this cannot be denied. But the thought that the difficulties can be lessened or eliminated by "restating" or liberalizing theology, is a delusion and a snare. The contrary is true. The acceptance of the new theology position raises difficulties that are greater than those of orthodoxy.

---

[2] Compare p. 278 of the present book.

[3] *The Christian Register*, May 9, 1918, p. 15.

The outstanding fact is often ignored that religious liberalism, though coming under a Christian name, has no acceptable foundation. Therefore it cannot claim reasonableness. We are told by representatives of liberalism that the question of the new theology's foundation is, like theology itself, a secondary matter, but this assertion is unacceptable to thinking people. The theologian who recedes from the rock foundation of God's Word, in order to take what he may suppose to be more reasonable ground, will, upon close examination, find that his new position is beset with greater difficulties than the orthodox position. If he is a thinking person he must sooner or later go backward or forward. It has been pointed out that many have gone forward into what is nothing more nor less than sugar-coated atheism, and others are drifting in that direction. It should be added that moderate liberalism shows an unmistakable tendency of drifting into radical liberalism. And yet, the atheist's position is an utterly untenable one. In fact, atheism (the denial of God, or the teaching that God is merely the immanent world energy) is a most unreasonable supposition. That learned men doubt the existence of God — deny that there is a great mind and purpose back of the universe — is indeed remarkable. True, the unbelievers give various reasons why they do not believe in God; but the wonder is, that they do not perceive the far weightier unanswerable reasons for accepting the existence of God. That learned people fail to see the unreasonableness of the denial of God is clearly due to satanic influences, the devil having "blinded the minds of them which believe not." It is a sort of miracle of Satan, and not a small miracle at that.

The Gospel of salvation through the blood of Christ is to unregenerate, worldly-minded humanity, as well as to an

apostate church, a foolish, despisable thing. New theology men have referred to it as "pestilential" teaching. Not a few well-known liberalistic theologians have only scoffing and ridicule for it. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; *but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.* — We preach Christ crucified unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ *the power of God and the wisdom of God.*" (I Cor. 1:18, 23, 24).

Is it not an appalling fact that there are in our day men, supposed to be ministers of the Gospel, who openly declare that the crucified Christ, as the Apostles preached Him — or, in other words, the message of salvation through the Blood — is to them as well as to their congregations a stumblingblock and an offense? But to us who are saved, says the Apostle, He is "the power of God and the wisdom of God." Now here is clear evidence of the fundamental contrast between the non-believer and the believer. What the one considers foolishness the other finds to be the power of God. To him who has accepted the Gospel message and is experiencing its power in his own life there is nothing so vital, nothing so satisfying, nothing to make his heart burn within him, as the sweet story of the Gospel, the message that Christ gave His life for us, "the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God" (I Pet. 3:18). On the other hand, the preaching of a modernized gospel is indeed an offense. You cannot blame those who say they find it an uninteresting, lifeless thing. It is a form of the Gospel minus the power thereof.

The fact must not be overlooked that religion is politely bowed out of existence by modern "religious" liberalism. Religious psychology, as now taught in our leading

seminaries, undertakes to give a biological explanation of religion. It denies that there is a special religious instinct. Religion, including Christianity, is reduced to a psychological formula, which means, in plain English, that it is explained away. The case is similar to that of a certain naturalistic scientist searching the heavens with his telescopes and declaring that he did not find God. Considered from this viewpoint there is no vital difference between Christianity and other religions. Even natural religion, such as every person is supposed to have, though he may not hold to any religion, is held to be identical with "the essential religion of the spirit." All this means clearly that, according to modern theology, religion cannot be a matter of so great importance as has been supposed. Though it is obviously true that there is no vital difference between religious liberalism and paganism, we must insist that the Christianity of Christ and the apostles is of another character. There are the most fundamental differences between the old-fashioned Christianity and natural religion (such as you had before your conversion) or pagan religion. Unless this be a fact, it were folly to propagate the Christian faith. In that case our missionaries would have no better message than that of the social gospel which reduces Christianity to a scheme for social improvement.

Our faith is "the victory that overcometh the world." True, there are those who in theory believe in the Scriptures giving assent to the Christian faith, but have never personally appropriated the truth of Christianity to themselves nor made it a part of their own lives. Hence they do not have a real conviction of the truth, not the faith that overcometh the world. If they profess the Christian faith, they have not permitted the truth of the Gospel to become the de-

termining factor in their own lives. They do not dedicate themselves to the service of God and of their fellows as followers of Jesus Christ. They find it too onorous a task to regulate their lives according to the Scripture requirements and to bear the reproach of Christ. They may profess an "otherworldly" faith but in fact are enwrapped in this present world, its treasures and pleasures. Yet, though it is quite true that salvation is of faith by grace, it is just as true that faith is not without its fruits and the Scriptures state clearly what these fruits are. Dead faith is not true faith. "Dead orthodoxy" does not deserve the name of orthodoxy. Worldliness and mere pretense are, like modern liberalism, deadly foes to true Christianity.

Both prophecy and recent history are pointing to the fact that the end of the present dispensation will bear a striking resemblance to the earliest Christian period. Our Lord and His followers were "despised and rejected of men;" the great and mighty of the world deemed them beneath their notice or heaped infamy on their heads. Did not the Sanhedrim condemn Christ to death on the charge of blasphemy? Did not some of the philosophers of Athens refer to the apostle Paul as a "babbler." Yet after nearly three centuries of expansion the Christian Church began to grow cold and worldly. The rulers of the world, the worldly philosophers began to favor it. The church had a great outward growth. In the course of history Christianity was in many countries made the religion of the state. Every person was compelled by law to be a member of the state church. A large part of the world was apparently Christianized. But the supposed Christian religion of the masses and of the great of this world was a superficial thing.

Now in our time we see the world throwing off its Christian cloak. Modern liberalism, though it has retained the Christian name, does not claim to represent Christianity as the apostles preached it. Once more, as in the days of the apostles, Christianity is despised and rejected by the leaders of thought. And mark well, the greatest enemies of the crucified Christ and of apostolic Christianity are men who hold some of the most responsible positions in the church, just as in that early day the most formidable foes of our Lord were the ecclesiastical leaders in the religious body of which He Himself was a member by birth. As modern liberalists in high stations openly reject the doctrines of the deity of Christ and the atonement through the Blood, just so the ecclesiastical dignitaries of that period condemned Him to death because, said they, "he made himself the Son of God" (John 19:7). And as in that period the masses followed their ecclesiastical dignitaries rather than "the carpenter of Nazareth," the fishermen of Galilee, and the tentmaker of Tarsus, so the masses of our time will not accept the leadership of those who follow the footsteps of Christ and the apostles. In a word, the world and the apostate church are openly despising the old Bible faith. And those who stand for the faith will not fare better at their hands than did Christ and the apostles at the hands of the high priests and scribes. The days are again upon us when to bear "the reproach of Christ" means something similar as it did in the primitive Christian period.

The apostle Paul refers repeatedly to the fact that the Gospel, as he preached it, was, in the eyes of the ancient unbelieving world, foolishness — "anti-intelligence," to use a modern term. Now this is precisely the charge advanced by modern liberalism against those who stand for the old Gospel. For example, Dean Shailer Mathews says: "Over

against intelligence in religion [speaking of religion as represented by modern liberalism] is being organized anti-intelligence" meaning evangelical conservatism to which Dean Mathews refers in the same instance as "obscurant and reactionary religion."[4] The attitude taken by modern religious liberalism to those who represent the old Bible faith is similar to that of the unbelievers in all ages of history. The fact is that between the full-fledged religious liberalism and free thought, or unbelief, there is just this difference that the one claims the predicate "religious" while the other does not. What the representatives of religious liberalism mean when they speak of non-doctrinal, non-creedal, ethical religion, is the same thing for which the freethinkers too stand, though they do not pretend to be religious.

This means, as has been pointed out elsewhere, that the modern religion, as defended by its leading representatives in contradistinction to pronounced free thought, is a trifling thing, a shibboleth. An illustration to the point is found in the confession of a noted liberalist, Professor Roy Wood Sellars, who "for years felt that it would be better to give up the word *religion* entirely," but finally decided to retain it and unite with the Unitarians.[5] Though an outspoken atheist, as his writings indicate, he is a prominent member of the Unitarian Church. He, as well as the leading professors in the liberalistic seminaries, is a representative of the modern non-doctrinal, ethical "religion." Now we are told that this class of religionists — the agnostics and the pronounced atheists — stand for "intelligence" against the supposed anti-intelligence of those who

[4] *The Biblical World,* November, 1920, p. 554.

[5] Compare p. 271 of the present book.

are loyal to the faith of the apostles. Mark well, despite the word-jugglery, camouflage and counterfeiting of religious liberalism, conservatives are accused of obscurantism. They can say, with the apostle Paul: "We are fools for Christ's sake" — in the eyes of the modern deniers of the fundamentals of the faith.

That the denial of the fundamentals within the church necessarily means disaster is not open to argument. Liberalism rejects the supernatural character of Christianity. Natural religion alone is to find favor. It is, by way of illustration, as if that which our Lord has planted — the grapevines — should be suppressed, and that which naturally grows — the briars, burdock, milkweed and their ilk — be permitted to take possession of the vineyard in the hope that ultimately the fruit will surpass that of the grapevines. Every one knows what will happen if that which nature is planting in the vineyard be given the right of way. The grapevine has no chance where that which grows naturally is tolerated. Both in morals and religion the good plants require cultivation, effort and care. A general toleration of all plants in the vineyard would be an absurd proposition.

Consider for a moment what would be the consequence if the liberalistic professors in the seminaries advocated modern *moral* teachings, such for example as the exceedingly loose views in regard to the relation of the sexes which are now advanced by not a few learned and influential writers in Europe. If liberal ministers preached such views, the decline of morals would be appalling. But clearly the denial of the Christian fundamentals by preachers is not a whit less disastrous to true religion than the advocacy of immorality. Is the church of Jesus Christ going to countenance that sort of thing?

The fact cannot be too strongly emphasized that com-

promise with the new theology means defeat. The thought that the cause of the old faith can be enhanced by a small measure of modernization is a delusion. No sooner have you discarded some point of the faith in favor of a more liberal view, when you discover — if you are accustomed to doing your own thinking — that your position is unreasonable and untenable. "One thing is certain," says Dr. Henry B. Smith, "that infidel science will rout everything except thorough-going Christian orthodoxy. All the flabby theories will go over board. The fight will be between a stiff, thorough-going orthodoxy and a stiff, thorough-going infidelity."[4] A position of compromise is a losing position. It means that you virtually accept the liberal viewpoint.

The great majority of the membership of the evangelical denominations in the United States and Canada is decidedly of the conservative school. For this fact there is abundant testimony by liberalistic writers.[5] This means that as a rule the churches have it in their power to take a pronounced position for the old Bible faith. Where this is not the case, or, in other words, where the liberals are a majority, those who stand for the faith once for all delivered to the saints find themselves, without question, face to face with the duty to "come out from among them and be separate," as did the Congregationalists of about a hundred years ago. It is impossible to suppose that, in the minds of those who are informed of the revolutionary character of liberalism, there can be the least doubt as to the necessity of separation. The

---

[4] *Apologetics,* p. 194; quoted in *The Princeton Theological Review,* 1913, p. 502.

[5] E. g. *The Monist,* 1915, p. 46; *The Reformed Church Review,* 1918, p. 302. *The American Journal of Theology,* 1917, p. 349. *The Biblical World,* August, 1915, p. 95; the same, November, 1918, p. 288; *The Christian Register,* August 19, 1920, p. 807.

question is therefore, do the representatives of the old faith have the courage of their conviction? Are they made of the same stuff as were the apostles and martyrs? Are they going to take the position of loyalty to Christ, or are they willing, for the sake of a false peace, to recognize as a Christian church an institution that does not stand for the Christian truth? Is their faith genuine, or is it only sham and pretense?

The liberalists, needless to say, are not kindly disposed to the thought of leaving the evangelical churches. The unbelieving men in the seminaries will not resign their positions of their own accord. Not a few liberalistic writers have advanced the opinion that the representatives of liberalism should stay in the churches, for the reason that they can do far more for the cause of liberalism if they are members of some evangelical church, than if they were without the church. A liberal Baptist writer in *The Standard* said:

> For a liberal leader to leave the Baptist denomination is to give aid and comfort to those reactionaries among us who seek to deny the Baptists' sacred right to independent thought. — Thus the position of the liberal thinkers who remain among the Baptists is made more difficult, and the progress of liberal thought among our churches is greatly retarded.

Of this there cannot be any doubt. Considered from their own viewpoint liberalists would, therefore, be unwise to leave the church so long as they are permitted to stay. On the other hand, from the standpoint of the old faith it is not only unwise but it is a glaring inconsistency and an offence to permit men to plant "natural religion" in the vineyard of the Lord. And it is vain to suppose that a church which retains an evangelical name, but is committed to the cause of liberalism, as are the Unitarians, will ultimately fare better than the Unitarians. That the churches which openly stand for liberalism and do not pretend to be evan-

gelical, are suffering from anæmia and in consequence find themselves slowly dying, is an undeniable fact. It must be expected that the liberalistic churches within evangelical denominations, if they openly renounce the evangelical name and faith, will ultimately share the fate of the Unitarians. All this means that he who fails to recognize the need of separation is indirectly aiding the cause of liberalism.

Furthermore there is every reason to believe that, with the progress of the modern apostasy and the drawing nigh of the coming of the Lord, it will become more and more evident that a cold, formal, worldly type of Christianity, tuned to the spirit of the time, will not stand the test. It must be expected that for the undecided and faltering who do not mean to take an out-and-out position for the old Christian faith, it will become increasingly difficult to cast their lot with those who stand for the faith. Those who do not know from experience the blessed reality of the truth of the Gospel and of a life of prayer-fellowship with God will find themselves in danger of being swept away by the popular current of unbelief.

The apostasy that is evident on every hand is an unmistakable sign of the times. It should arouse believing Christendom from its lethargy and listlessness to a realization of conditions as they are. In consequence of the apostasy the church finds itself today face to face with a crisis such as it has never passed through in its history. The need of the hour is men and women who from conviction stand for Christ and the truth, for "the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints," counting with Paul "all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord" (Phil. 3:8). Men and women are needed who are not of the world even as He was not of the world — who, realizing the blessedness of His service, are determined

to be found watching at His coming — who are testifying for Him against the worldliness and materialism of the age, against the modern counterfeit theology — who refuse to be unequally yoked together with those who deny the fundamentals of the faith. The crisis is here. At a fearful rate the vineyard of the Lord is being devastated by the representatives of liberalism within the church — by men who claim to be called to cultivate plants which cannot be recognized as vines. Shall we countenance these things and thereby become in part responsible for the disaster that is overtaking the church? Or are we, as loyal disciples of our Lord, ready to meet the crisis squarely? Are we willing to unreservedly come out on His side taking an out-and-out stand for Him? May our answer be that of Peter at a time when many went back and walked no more with Jesus, and the Master addressed to the disciples the question, "Will ye also go away?" Then Simon Peter answered him: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John 6:67-70).

INDEX

Abbott, Lyman, 11, 56, 105, 141
Absolutes, no, in new theology, 48, 54, 55, 57, 58, 177, 235, 236, 250
Ackerman, H. C., 24, 102
Agnosticism, 26, 47, 249
Altruism, 35
America, 64, 188
American Unitarian Association, 186
Ames, E. S., 11, 25, 35, 37, 76, 82, 134, 153, 270
Anarchy, religious, 220
Anderson, K. C., 12, 87, 93, 118
Andover Seminary, 294
"Anti-intelligence," 318
Apostasy, modern, 17, 320, 321
Aristotle, 52
Arnold, M., 136
Astrology, 270
Athearn, W. S., 130, 241, 256
Atheism, 39, 75, 77-79, 151, 152, 198, 233-238, 246, 253, 270, 271, 312, 313
Athens, 316
Atonement, the, 26, 41, 60, 95, 96-100, 278; moral influence theory of, 96-100
Augustine, church father, 237
Australia, 144
Authority of Scripture, meaning of, 25

"Back to nature," 123, 131
Bacon, L. W., 301, 302
Bade, W. F., 158
Baptist confessions, 211
Basis of faith sought for new theology, 48
Bebel, August, 161
Bergson, Henri, 52
Berkowitz, H., 71
Berry, J. F., 269
Bible, English version of, 19; value of, destroyed, 28
Bible reading neglected, 26
Bible Schools, 16, 262-264
Binet-Sangle, 91
Biologists, 246
Bolsheviki, 304
Bond of Unitarian union, 87
Books, immoral, 255
Booth, General, 136
Bornhausen, K., 21
Boston, 226, 302
Boyd, J. H., 13
Brahmo Somaj, 178
British and Foreign Bible Society, 29
Brooks, Phillips, 25
Brown, W. A., 69, 236, 292
Bryan, W. J., 234, 242
Bryan, W. L., 230
Bryant, 25
Buckham, J. W., 55, 281
Buddhists, 172, 185, 218
Butler, Nathaniel, 239

Calvin, 208, 237
Calvinism, 237, 238
Camouflage, theological, 17, 63, 77, 79, 87, 266-278
Campbell, R. J., 76, 87, 95, 121
Canon, modern, 25
Carver, Thomas N., 137, 290, 300

Case, S. J., 57
Certainty excluded in new theology, 48
Channing, W. E., 295, 302
Character, salvation by, 98
Chapman, J. W., 188
Chautauqua, 174
Chicago Association of Baptist Ministers, 207
Childhood, faith of, 240
China, 184, 187, 188
Christian Register, 26, 301, 306
Christie, F. A., 178, 298, 306, 308
Christ, deity of, 21, 38, 41, 60, 85-93; His authority denied, 21
Christian Science, 226
Church discipline, 200-206
Church fathers, 30
Church, modern idea of, 102-104; rights of, 203; sphere of, 148
Clark, H. W., 59
Clarke, James F., 301
Clarke, Wm. N., 26, 27, 29, 64, 70, 86, 105-108, 114-117, 275; unreasonable dogmatism of, 107
Coe, Geo. A., 153, 154, 165, 183, 221, 288
Colleges, liberalism in, 16
Community Church of New York, 218
Compromise unacceptable, 318, 319
Compton-Rickett, J., 260
Comstock, Anthony, 255
Confucianism, 14, 172, 185
Confusion, religious, 36
Conscience, liberty of, 200-206, 207-220; modern type of, 203; modern view of, 123
Consciousness, religious, 53
Constantine, emperor, 201
Constitution of United States, 213
Contrasts between old and new theology, 15, 16
Conway, Moncure D., 125, 226
Conwell, Russell D., 244
Cook, E. A., 91
Cooke, G. W., 37
Cope, E. D., 232
Cope, H. F., 149, 156, 171
Crane, Frank, 149, 230
Cross, George, 56, 97, 195, 208
Counterfeiting, theological, 266-278

Dance, immorality of, 128, 129
Darwin, 25
Decline, moral, 124
Definite teaching needed, 29
Deism, 67
"Democracy of God," 153
Democracy, religious, 146-163
"Democratizing God," 149
Denial of fundamentals, 14
Depravity, total, 94
Departure, radical, from creeds of Christendom, 12
Descartes, 52
Despair, result of higher criticism, 28
Devastating effects of liberalism, 288
Devil-worshipers, 171
Devotees, of India, 40
Dissenters, evangelical, 210
Disunion, organized, 220
Divorce, 33
Dixon, A. C., 29
Doan, F. C., 76
"Doctrine not essential," 54, 56-58, 318
Dodson, G. R., 77, 197, 253
Dogma, rejection of, 54, 55
Dogmatism, negative, 58, 227, 228
Dole, C. F., 233
Dotterer, R. H., 70
Doubt regarding God's Word, 40, 41
Drake, Durant, 170, 174, 287
Drews, Arthur, 90

Earp, E. L., 138
Easy-going modern faith, 42
Edison, Thomas, 230

Eliot, C. W., 171
Eliot, S. A., 170, 297, 298, 306
Ellis, G. E., 12, 301
Emerson, R. W., 301
Epictetus, 214
Error, a mortal, 138
Essence of Christianity redefined, 12
Ethical Culture Societies, 45, 82, 119, 120
Ethical interpretation of Christianity, 36, 38, 45, 118-124
Eucken, Rudolf, 52, 92
Evolutionism, 123, 232-238
Experience, religious definitions of, 36; of spiritual realities, 43; not a substitute for Scripture authority, 50

"Faith in faith itself," 55
Falsehoods, historical, 205
Fatherhood of God, 41, 96, 97, 299
Faulkner, J. A., 116, 251
Faunce, W. H. P., 9, 287
Federal Council of Churches, 169, 188, 195-197
Fenn, W. W., 42, 48, 95, 238, 274, 297
Ferrero, Guigl., 126
Fitch, A. P., 91, 150, 292
Forsyth, P. E., 57
Foster, G. B., 15, 25, 81, 82, 83, 88, 108-114, 121, 207, 235, 251, 276, 280, 289
France, 205
Freedom, religious, 200-206, 207-220
Freethinkers, 109, 110, 248, 318
Fundamentals denied, 14

Garvie, A. E., 59, 69, 121, 237
Gates, Errett, 12, 149
George, Lloyd, 196
Germany, 291
Gilbert, G. H., 11
Gillies, R., 187
God, His fatherhood, 41, 96, 97, 299; His nature, 66, 67; liberalistic conceptions of, 68, 75-77
Goethe, 25, 256
Gorky, Maxim, 144
Gospel, modern, inadequate, 304
Gray, James M., 264
Great Britain, 188
Greene, W. B., Jr., 189, 246

Haas, J. A. W., 130, 229
Haeckel, Ernst, 75
Hall, G. Stanley, 76, 81, 221
Hall, Winfield S., 127
Harper, W. R., 170, 255
Harris, C. J., 264
Harrison, Frederic, 136
Harvard College, 294
Harvard University, 65
Heathen not to be converted, 180
Hedging, 273-275
Heresy trials, 210
Higher Criticism, 16; defined, 22
Hill, Wm. B., 241
Hirsch, 91
Historians, 246
Historico-critical method, 64
Hobbs, W. H., 250
Hodge, C. W., 90
Hodgkin, Henry T., 155, 160, 167, 179
Holmes, J. H., 58, 128, 151, 213, 218
Holmes, H. W., 172
Hopelessness of modernism, 125
Horr, G. E., 157
Horton, R. F., 30
Humanity, religion of, 180
Humanitarianism, the new religion, 49
Huxley, 232

Idolatry, modern, 84, 152
Immanence, divine, 66-80, 121, 122, 226
Immortality, 221-224
Imperialism, 227

Incarnation, modern views of, 86, 87
India, 28, 40, 178, 189
Inductive method of Bible study, 22, 23
Inefficiency of liberalism, 286-293
Inerrancy of Scripture, 18
Ingersoll, R. G., 9, 10, 17, 252
Inspiration, counterfeit of, 24; modern theories of, 19, 20; doctrine of, needed, 30
Intolerance of religious democracy, 157, 161, 162
Inwood, Charles, 188
Irreconcilable positions, two, 16

Jacks, L. P., 280
James, Wm., 25, 221
Japan, 178, 187-190
Jesus, "modernized," 90; liberalistic view of, 48; "a religious genius," 63
Jews, 17, 36, 63, 64, 196, 218
Johnson, G., 20
Jones, F. S., 257

Kelly, H. A., 126
Kepler, 25
Kim, Y., Dr., 127
Kirkland, Pres., 295
Knox, John, 215
Koran, the, 214
Krauskopf, J., 126
Kurtz, D. W., 87, 92, 96

Lake, Kirsopp, 73
Lamson, A., 295
Laplace, 228
Lawrance, I. L., 169, 179
Leinbach, P. S., 198
Leuba, James H., 245-248
Liberal religion, a mere philosophy, 58
Liberalism, devastating effects of, 288; failure of, 41, 284, 291; inefficiency of, 286-293
Liberals, a minority, 320; in evangelical churches, 307, 321
Liberty, religious, 200-206, 207-220
Locke, 25
Loosten, de, 91
Lordship of Jesus Christ, 159, 160
Lowell, 25
Luther, 34, 208, 261
Lynch, Frederick, 283

Machen, J. H., 31
Macintosh, D. C., 90, 186, 286
Maeterlinck, 25, 123
MacCauley, C., 189
Macfarland, C. S., 196
Man, divinity of, 13
Martineau, J., 268
Martyrs, 104
Marx, Karl, 140, 161, 162
Materialized religion, 102
Mathews, Shailer, 9, 107, 160, 163, 181, 192, 317
McAfee, J. E., 156, 161, 162
McConnell, F. J., 71, 72, 260
McGiffert, A. C., 14, 46, 59, 67, 71, 73, 85, 149, 156, 198, 222, 227, 266, 277, 288
McKeever, W. A., 74
Message of the Bible, 43
"Method alone essential," 47, 49
Miller, Dr., 179
Ministry, the liberal, 252
Miracles, 67, 70; denied, 22
Missionary Education Movement, 184
Missions, opposed by liberals, 176; mission money misused, 276; modern view of, 176-191
Modernizing the faith, 312
Mohammedanism, 14, 24, 36, 63, 196
Moody, D. L., 260
Moore, E. C., 11, 82, 176, 177, 185, 218, 288
Moral interpretation of religion, 36, 38, 45, 118-124
Moral truth only relative, 122
Moravian, The, 16

More, Paul E., 249
Morehouse, 259
Morley, John, 136, 268
Mott, John R., 192
Mulert, Herman, 273

Narrowness of liberalists, 112, 112
Naturalism, 226-238; religious, 72, 73; spiritualized, 103
Natural religion, 40
Necromancy, 168
Negation in new theology, 13
Nero, 163
New England, 202, 212
New theology inessential, 73; without a foundation, 47-49, 60
Non-doctrinal religion, 54, 55, 318
Northup, C., 14

Obscurantism, liberal, 271, 319
Old Testament Scriptures, 31
Orr, H. R., 269
Otherworldliness, 223
Orthodoxy, the new, 11, 82, 270; "dead," 101, 316

Paganism, 24, 36, 39, 315; cultured, 130
Pantheism, 122
Park, C. E., 303
Patten, S. N., 76
Patton, F. L., 312
Paul, apostle, 104, 136, 137, 317
Persecution, 161, 162, 200-206
Peter, apostle, 104
Pfennigsdorf, E., 282
Pharisees, 275
Philosophy, 52, 72
Physicists, 246
Platner, J. W., 296
Plato, 20, 52
Poison, sugar-coated, 117
Popery, modern, 72, 105, 108, 112, 113
Prayer, 66, 80-84; atheistic type of, 83; strange definitions of, 81

Proof-text method, 19
Protective tariff, illustration concerning, 17
Protestantism, 205, 208, 215, 217; disintegration of, 308
Psychologists, 246
Psychology, religious, 40, 231, 314, 315

Radical departure from the faith, 15, 16
Randall, J. H., 57, 76, 134, 180, 194
Rationalists, 36
Rauschenbusch, W., 56, 59, 68, 97, 98, 100, 119, 140, 141, 145, 149, 151, 153, 154, 168, 221
Reconstruction, personal, 132
Reese, C. W., 77
Reformation, the, 201, 215, 217
Reform Jews, 177
Regeneration, 41
Relativism, 54, 55, 57, 58, 177, 235, 236, 250; a sickening sense of, 48
Religion, creedless, 305; definition of, 35, 36; easy-going modern, 292; experiental, 40; explained away, 231, 315; materialistic conception of, 37; natural, 40, 320; secondhand, 164
Religious education, 164-175
Religious Education Association, 169-173, 183
Religious instinct denied, 37
Religious instruction abandoned, 165
Religiousness and blindness, 40
Resurrection of Christ, 26
Revelation, divine, needed, 42; minimized, 59
Revolt against doctrinal theology, 11
Revolution, religious, 9-17, 271, 272
Ritschl, A., 38, 62-65, 95, 236, 266
Rittelmeyer, F., 291

Robins, Raymond, 144
Roberts, Richard, 283
Roberts, Th. M., 174
Ross, G. A. J., 121
Royce, J., 35, 68, 76
Rural Life Movement, 138
Russell, Bertrand, 83, 125

Sabatier, A., 35, 208
Sachs, Arthur, 58
Salvation, conditions of, 99; modern conception of, 15, 310; socially interpreted, 100-102, 132-145, 310
Sanhedrin, 316
Santayana, G., 206, 289
Savage, M. J., 28
Schaff, David, 262
Schleiermacher, 62, 64
Science, 225-231; not the basis for theology, 49
Scripture, authority of, 46, 54; authority of, denied, 25; inspiration of, 18; new theology view of, 106
Scudder, Doremus, 188
Secondhand religion, 164
Secret orders, 204
Secularization of religion, 121
Self-destruction, 223
Self-effort, 310
Sellars, R. W., 36, 37, 49, 74, 103, 151, 161, 195, 271, 318
Seminaries, liberalism in, 16
Sentimentalism, moral, 292
Shakespeare, 25, 27
Sherman, Stuart P., 124, 131
Shibboleth, 112, 318
Shipwreck of faith, 111, 242
Shotwell, J. T., 12
Simons, Minot, 170
Sin defined, 94; making light of, 95; modern views of, 121
Sinlessness of Jesus denied, 92
Sinful nature of man denied, 15
Smith, G. B., 24, 25, 27, 47, 48, 54, 74, 76, 119, 123, 134, 150, 158, 180, 182, 184, 235, 236, 242, 250, 267, 287
Smith, Goldwin, 125, 223, 227
Smith, Henry B., 320
Soares, Th. G., 81, 153
Social gospel, 132-145
Socialism, 59, 140, 141
Social service, 43
Societies for ethical culture, 45, 60
Sociologists, 246
Socrates, 214
Soul, supposed evolution of, 37
Sovereignty of God denied, 146-163
Sperry, W. L., 198
Spencer, Herbert, 125, 136, 230
Spiller, G., 119
Spurgeon, C. H., 31, 198, 260
Stall, Sylvanus, 127
State-churchism, 201, 211
State, sphere of, 147
Stephens, L., 52
Straton, J. R., 131
Strong, A. H., 251, 257
Substitutes for theology, 59
Success, two views of, 104
Sunday School Association, International, 169
Supernatural denied, 69, 75, 270, 271
Superstition, accusation of, 12

Taft, ex-President, 192, 307
Tagore, 178
Tennant, R. F., 88
Tennyson, 25
Testament, the Old, 31
Theater, modern, corruption of, 128, 129
Theism, outgrown, 77
Theology of liberals, 46
Theological schools, conference of, 194, 263, 264; liberalism in, 16, 239-265
Thermopylae of Christendom, 31
Tithing, 191
Tokugawa, Prince, 180
Tokyo, 180

Transformation, radical, of theology, 12
Transmigration of souls, 222
Triumph of liberalism is a defeat, 13
Troeltsch, 65
Truth only relative, 48, 54, 55, 57, 58, 177, 235, 236, 250; to be defended, 255; authority of, 26
Tufts, J. H., 122
Twofacedness of Ritschlianism, 63
Tyrrell, George, 260

Unbelievers, there are none, 10
Uncertainty, agony of, 48
Unequal yoke, 193, 194
Unitarian attitude to missions, 178, 179; conference, western, 37; denial of the faith, 56
Unitarianism, failure of, 294-308, 321
Unitarian ministry, 307
Unitarians, 28, 46, 321
Unionism, modern religious, 192-199
Union of church and state, 147
Union Theological Seminary, New York, 65
Uniting all religions, 194
Unreasonableness of new theology, 48, 266-279
University of Chicago, 65
Upheaval, religious, 36

Value-judgments, 236, 237
Van Dyke, H., 237
Variations in Bible manuscripts, 19
Vedder, H. C., 222
Vichert, J. F., 216, 217
Virgin birth of Christ, 26
Voodooism, 168

Ward, Wm. H., 130
Ware, Henry, 295
Warfield, B. B., 88, 90
Weakness of modern religious education, 172
Wellhausen, 28
Wesley, John, 214
Whittier, 25
Wilcox, Ella W., 127
Williams, Roger, 207, 208, 214, 217, 218
Wise, Rabbi, 128
Word-jugglery, 24, 266-279
World and church, 102-104
World War, 280-285
Worship abandoned, 82, 151, 152; minimized, 82; "must be relinquished," 74, 270
Wrath of God, 94

Yale University, 65
Y. M. C. A., 219
Youtz, H. A., 12, 55, 150, 165, 172, 233, 238, 277

Zerbe, A. S., 234, 246
Zwingli, 215

DATE DUE

BR 1617 .H6 1921

Horsch, John, 1867-

Modern religious liberalism

2,075

United Theological Seminary Library
MAIN BR1617.H678 1921
Horsch, John, Modern religious liberalis
3 0645 0001 2822 9